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The Manning Times

$30M rehabilitation envisioned for historic Summerton schools

National Park Service outlines plans for Scott's Branch, Summerton High during Brown Five Symposium

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
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Inside the halls of the former Scott's Branch High School, where generations of Black students once attended classes under South Carolina's segregated education system, National Park Service officials are envisioning a different kind of classroom — one that will teach visitors about the Clarendon County families who helped change American history.

During a community forum and tour Thursday, Nov. 5, National Park Service officials outlined plans to transform the former school into a visitor and educational facility as part of Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park. The proposed rehabilitation of Scott's Branch and the former Summerton High School carries a combined estimated construction cost of nearly $30 million.

The gathering was part of the Nov. 4-6 Brown Five Symposium, which brought representatives from Kansas, Delaware, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and South Carolina to Clarendon County. The five communities are connected through the cases that led to the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1954 decision declaring racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional.

Dr. James Williams, superintendent of Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park, led attendees through the former Scott's Branch building, sharing details of the agency's preservation plans and an October 2026 historic structures report examining both Summerton schools.

Preserving the past, planning for the future

The report estimates approximately $21.6 million in construction costs for Scott's Branch and $8.1 million for Summerton High School, totaling nearly $29.7 million. Those figures exclude certain additional expenses, including hazardous-material abatement, parking lot repairs and some design and project management costs.

Built in 1951, Scott's Branch was part of South Carolina's effort to improve segregated Black schools rather than integrate public education. The building originally served elementary, junior high and high school students.

During the tour, Williams pointed out areas where original windows had been filled in with concrete blocks and lowered ceilings concealed earlier architectural features. Restoring those elements is among the improvements proposed in the report, along with replacing the deteriorating roof, addressing water infiltration, upgrading electrical, plumbing and heating and cooling systems, and improving accessibility.

The National Park Service envisions Scott's Branch as the primary visitor and administrative center for the Summerton portion of the national park, with historical exhibits, a theater, bookstore, offices and maintenance facilities.

Williams also discussed the possibility of using former classrooms for educational programming, including daylong student visits and potentially overnight civil rights camps.

"Right now, we don't have set plans, but what I'm imagining is this will be an education wing where we can have students come in for the day," Williams said during the tour.

He explained that overnight programming would require additional renovations and safety improvements, including fire suppression systems.

The building remains owned and operated by the Clarendon County School District and continues to accommodate community organizations, church activities and other services. Williams said maintaining those connections is an important consideration as the agency develops its plans.

"One of the questions that we get all the time is, are you going to kick us out?" Williams said. "And my answer is, I hope not."

The proposed layout would allow portions of the building to remain available for community activities while other areas serve visitors and park operations.

The former Summerton High School, which served white students during segregation, is also included in the park's expansion. Its historic auditorium has been identified as a potential community arts and gathering space, while other portions of the building could eventually accommodate a

See PARK | **14A**





THEN AND NOW: The east façade of Scott's Branch School in Summerton is pictured in 1979 (top) and 2026 (bottom), showing changes to the historic building over nearly five decades. The National Park Service's proposed rehabilitation includes restoring original architectural features, including classroom windows and the entrance, while adapting the former school for visitor services and educational programming as part of Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park.

(COURTESY OF PHIL DRAKE/KNIGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1979; STRATA, 2026. BOTH IMAGES APPEAR IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT)

Seventh person charged in multi-county insurance fraud investigation

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
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A Sumter County man is the seventh person charged in an ongoing, multi-county insurance fraud investigation after authorities say he submitted falsified medical documents in an attempt to collect more than $17,000 in disability insurance benefits.



LONNIE JOHNSON, JR.

Lonnie Johnson Jr., 35, was charged Oct. 28 by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division with two counts of forgery and two counts of presenting false claims for insurance payments. The charges follow the arrests of six women, including a Manning insurance agent accused of submitting fraudulent insurance applications.

According to arrest warrants, Johnson obtained a short-term disability insurance policy through Aflac on or about March 1, 2025, for injuries he reportedly sustained in an all-terrain vehicle incident in Clarendon County.

Investigators allege Johnson subsequently submitted two falsified physicians' statements from Midlands Ortho & Neurosurgery in support of insurance claims related to those injuries.

The first claim, submitted on or about May 23, 2025, included a statement that investigators determined had not been issued by the medical facility. According to the warrant, the physician's signature was forged, and Johnson allegedly attempted to obtain an undeserved financial benefit of more than $10,000.

A second claim, submitted on or about July 22, 2025, included another allegedly falsified physician's statement from the same facility. Investigators said the document was not issued by the medical provider and contained a forged signature. The second claim involved an attempted financial benefit of approximately $7,800.

Both incidents resulted in separate forgery and insurance fraud charges. According to the warrants, investigators relied on Aflac's electronic records and witness statements in establishing probable cause.

Johnson's arrest is the latest in an investigation that previously resulted in charges against five women Oct. 14 and a sixth woman Oct. 27.

Among those previously charged is Jeanette Nicole Weaver, 40, of Manning, an insurance producer who faces 14 counts of fraudulent insurance application by an agent.

According to warrants in Weaver's case, she allegedly submitted fraudulent applications for Aflac coverage using other individuals' identifying information, including Social Security numbers and account credentials. Investigators allege the applications contained false information and were submitted to obtain insurance coverage or compensation for which the applicants were not eligible.

Four other women from Florence, Sumter, Columbia and Lake City were charged Oct. 14 in connection with the investigation.

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CLARENDON CERTIFIES ELECTION RESULTS

Official canvass adds 11 ballots, narrows agriculture commissioner race to one vote

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
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Editor's note: All vote totals and margins reported in this story reflect Clarendon County results only, unless otherwise specified. Statewide election outcomes may differ from the results within the county.

A three-vote margin in Clarendon County's comptroller general race disappeared during the election certification process Friday, Nov. 6, leaving Republican Mike Burkhold and Democrat Tiffany Boozer tied with 6,744 votes each.

The agriculture commissioner race was nearly as close, with Republican Cody Simpson receiving 6,681 votes to Democrat DeShawn Blanding's 6,680, a difference of just one vote. Simpson won the statewide contest.

Those were among the changes confirmed Friday when the Clarendon County Board of Voter Registration and Elections unanimously certified the results of the Nov. 3 general election following a review of provisional ballots, election records and previously uncounted ballots.

The county's official report shows 13,722 ballots cast among 21,280 registered voters, representing a turnout of 64.48%. That is an increase of 11 ballots from the election-night report, which listed 13,711 ballots and a turnout of 64.43%.

Board reviews ballots before certification

Meeting at the county voter registration and elections office in Manning, the board convened as the county Board of Canvassers to review ballots requiring additional consideration before certification.

Randall Curtis, senior area representative with the South Carolina Election Commission, explained that two voters had registered through the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles before the deadline, but their information had not transferred into the county's registration system. After verifying the records with the DMV, staff recommended counting both ballots.

Three additional provisional ballots were approved for voters who had requested absentee ballots but chose to vote in person. Election officials con-

See RESULTS | **12A**

DIGEST

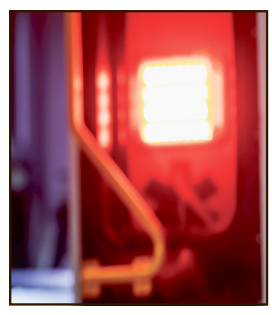


SALUTING our Hometown Heroes | **11A**

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Deer collisions bring costly repairs as fall activity increases

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY

Clarendon County recorded 87 deer-vehicle collisions in 2024, and with the animals entering one of their most active periods of the year, state officials are urging motorists to use extra caution on the roadways.

According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, approximately 45% of deer-vehicle collisions statewide occur during October and November, when breeding season sends deer traveling greater distances in search of mates.

The 87 collisions reported in Clarendon County in 2024 were up from 83 in 2023, according to preliminary South Carolina Department of Public Safety data included in SCDNR's 2024 Deer Harvest Report, the department's most recent annual report. Statewide, 6,628 collisions were reported in 2024.

For Johnson James, a State Farm insurance agent who operates an agency in Manning, deer collisions are a familiar and increasingly expensive part of the business.

His agency handles approximately 200 to 220 deer-related comprehensive insurance claims annually, representing roughly 20% of its total auto claims. During the fall, James said, deer-related claims increase by approximately 250%.

The average claim costs between $4,000 and $6,000, with damage typically concentrated on the front of the vehicle.

"The front ends of vehicles are the most expensive areas to repair/replace due to the technology, sensors and engine," James said.

Repair costs increased significantly following the COVID-19 pandemic, he said, and although prices have somewhat stabilized, the expense of repairing modern vehicles means some are declared total losses after striking a deer.

James said motorists should also understand what their insurance policies cover before they find themselves facing an unexpected repair bill.

Damage from striking a deer is generally covered under comprehensive insurance rather than collision coverage. Drivers carrying only liability insurance typically must pay for repairs themselves, while those with comprehensive coverage remain responsible for their deductibles.

James also noted that comprehensive coverage does not automatically provide a rental vehicle while repairs are being completed. Motorists must have separate rental car coverage on their policies or pay those expenses out of pocket.

While insurance coverage can help with the financial consequences, wildlife officials say avoiding a collision begins with understanding when and where deer are most likely to appear.

SCDNR warns that deer are especially active around dawn and dusk, when their movements often coincide with morning and evening commutes. Rural roads, wooded areas, agricultural fields and locations marked with deer-crossing signs warrant additional caution.

Deer also frequently travel in groups, meaning motorists who see one cross the roadway should watch for others following behind.

But James said drivers should not assume deer are limited to isolated country roads. He recently had a close encounter on the outskirts of Manning.

"I almost ran into a cowhorn buck last night on the edge of Manning, so just because you are close to businesses or houses does not mean there won't be a deer around," he said.

James encourages motorists to reduce their speed, watch the edges of roadways and use high beams when appropriate, provided they do not interfere with other drivers.

SCDNR also warns against swerving suddenly to avoid a deer. Losing control of a vehicle and striking a tree, another vehicle or a roadside object can result in more serious injuries than the initial collision.

If a collision does occur, motorists should move their vehicles to a safe location, activate their hazard lights and contact law enforcement when necessary.

Drivers should call 911 if someone is injured. If there are no injuries, they can contact the South Carolina Highway Patrol by dialing *HP (*47).

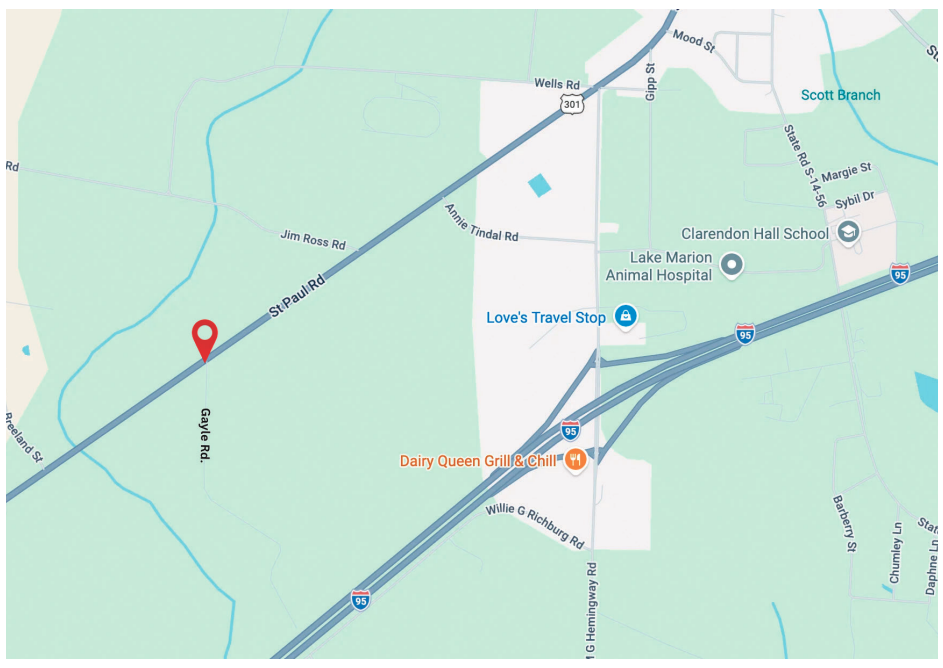
James recommends taking photographs of the damage and documenting the circumstances as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly because many deer collisions occur outside normal business hours. He said State Farm does not require a law enforcement report to file a deer-related insurance claim.

Drivers should also notify their insurance companies as soon as possible.

For motorists who wish to keep a deer killed in a vehicle collision, SCDNR advises obtaining a law enforcement incident report documenting how the animal died. That report can be provided to a processor as proof the deer was not illegally harvested.

With deer activity elevated during the fall breeding season, wildlife officials emphasize that caution behind the wheel remains the best way to prevent an unexpected encounter from becoming a costly or dangerous one.





MAP: Pamela Brook Paschall, 24, of Sumter, was killed in a single-vehicle wreck early Monday, Nov. 9, on U.S. 15 (St. Paul Road) near Gayle Road outside Summerton. Her husband and child were transported to McLeod Health Clarendon Hospital for treatment. The South Carolina Highway Patrol and Clarendon County Coroner's Office are investigating.

(GOOGLE MAPS IMAGE EDITED BY THE MANNING TIMES)

SUMTER WOMAN KILLED IN SINGLE-VEHICLE WRECK NEAR SUMMERTON

STAFF REPORT

A 24-year-old Sumter woman was killed early Monday morning in a single-vehicle wreck on U.S. 15 near Summerton, according to the South Carolina Highway Patrol and Clarendon County Coroner's Office.

Clarendon County Coroner Jacqueline Blackwell identified the driver as Pamela Brook Paschall, 24, of Sumter. The wreck occurred at approximately 4:20 a.m. Nov. 9 on U.S. 15, also known as St. Paul Road, near Gayle Road.

According to Master Trooper William Bennett with the South Carolina Highway Patrol, Paschall was driving a 2011 Toyota 4Runner south on U.S. 15 when the vehicle ran off the left side of the roadway, returned to the road, then ran off the left side again and overturned.

Paschall died at the scene from injuries sustained in the wreck.

Blackwell confirmed that Paschall's husband and child, who were passengers in the vehicle, were transported to McLeod Health Clarendon Hospital for treatment. Highway Patrol initially reported that neither passenger was injured.

The wreck remains under investigation by the South Carolina Highway Patrol and Clarendon County Coroner's Office.

An autopsy is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 10, at the Medical University of South Carolina.

BIRD FLU DETECTED IN CLARENDON COUNTY BALD EAGLE

State wildlife officials urge caution as avian influenza continues to circulate among wild birds

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY

Highly pathogenic avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu, has been confirmed in a bald eagle in Clarendon County, according to newly released data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service confirmed the detection Wednesday, Nov. 4, identifying the virus as Eurasian H5 (EA H5). The finding comes as the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources warns residents about ongoing avian influenza activity across the state, particularly during seasonal bird migration.

In a statement released Friday, Nov. 6, SCDNR said the virus continues to affect multiple bird species, with waterbirds and birds of prey among those most frequently impacted.

The latest case is not Clarendon County's first encounter with the disease. USDA records show nine confirmed detections in wild birds in the county since January 2023, including two earlier this year.

Those detections involved a ring-necked duck and a green-winged teal confirmed positive in January and February. Previous cases included five wood ducks in early 2024 and an American white pelican in 2023.

Statewide, USDA surveillance data shows 275 confirmed detections in South Carolina since the nationwide outbreak began in 2022. The agency's latest 30-day surveillance map, covering samples collected Oct. 6 through Nov. 5, shows just one detection in South Carolina during that period. The newly confirmed Clarendon County bald eagle case is also the state's only detection listed with a November confirmation date in the accompanying USDA data.

Wild birds can carry avian influenza without showing signs of illness, allowing the virus to spread as they migrate. Infected birds can also expose domestic poultry to the disease, making continued surveillance important for wildlife officials and poultry producers.

According to SCDNR, infected birds may exhibit neurological symptoms, including unusual behavior and loss of coordination. There is currently no treatment or cure for the

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PERSPECTIVES

Financial Focus
YEAR-END CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR WEALTH STRATEGY

SUBMITTED BY: JESSE SURETTE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR

As 2026 comes to a close, now As 2026 winds down, year-end planning is an opportunity to evaluate how your taxes, investment decisions and wealth-transfer strategies work together.

Start with some self-reflection. Focus on your progress, your feelings about it and actions you might want to take next year. If you've had personal, family or employment changes, think about how they could affect your goals and your ability to achieve them.



JESSE SURETTE
FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Consider your tax situation. Work with your financial advisor and tax professional to identify year-end tax opportunities. This could include tax-loss harvesting, where you can sell unrealized losses in your taxable accounts to offset capital gains recognized throughout the year, including long-term capital gain distributions from mutual funds. Also starting this year, a new limitation may reduce the value of itemized deductions for some taxpayers in the 37% tax bracket.

If you're 73 or older, be sure to check if you have required minimum distributions to take before the year-end.

Make the most of tax-advantaged savings opportunities. Consider whether you're making full use of your health savings account (HSA) and retirement plan opportunities. You should also review your mix of pre-tax and after-tax retirement savings to determine if you should adjust where you're saving. Depending on your circumstances, you may want to evaluate opportunities such as Roth conversions, backdoor Roth and mega backdoor Roth contributions. If you're saving for education, a 529 plan provides both flexibility and potential tax benefits.

Review giving strategies that can reduce your gross estate. If giving to others is one of your goals, consider charitable giving or annual gifting strategies to help support the people and causes you care about while also reducing the size of your taxable estate. You can also receive a current tax benefit from your charitable donations. If you're age 70½ or older, you may be able to exclude up to $111,000 from your adjusted gross income (AGI) by making qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) directly from your IRA. These distributions can satisfy your RMD if you have one, which helps lower your AGI.

Also note that the rules for other charitable donations changed this year. If you take the standard deduction, you can now deduction up to $1,000 (or $2,000 if you file jointly) of cash donations. On the other hand, if you itemize deductions, you may not be able to deduct as much of your charitable giving as in the past. Work with your tax professional and financial advisor on related strategies.

Revisit your estate plan and beneficiary designations. Changes in

See FOCUS | 7A



A LOOK BACK AT POLITICAL SATIRE: This vintage political cartoon, preserved in the New York Public Library's digital collections, depicts industrialist John D. Rockefeller and the enormous influence of big business on American government. Though created more than a century ago, the illustration reflects debates over wealth, power and political influence that remain just as relevant today.

(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTIONS)

The quiet rewrite of America's signature preservation law could harm SC's historic places

BY BRIAN TURNER, SCDAILYGAZETTE.COM

Historic preservation is more than old mansions and dusty artifact displays.

It is a way of thinking about the places where we live and work every day. It is caring for community gathering places like post offices and churches. And it is seizing the opportunity we have to pass down pride for the places that define us as South Carolinians and Americans across generations.



BRIAN TURNER
PRESIDENT AND CEO, PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF CHARLESTON

At present, this reflection is more than an academic exercise.

The Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act, while well-meaning in name, contains the most significant change to federal preservation law in 60 years. The law has been introduced in the U.S. Senate and is slated for a vote soon after the midterm elections.

In 1966, Congress declared preservation a national policy.

The National Historic Preservation Act was devised in an age when downtowns were carelessly being severed by interstates.

Hulking modern towers suddenly appeared next to stately courthouses. Grand buildings were erased to make way for more efficient alternatives which have not stood the test of time. Think: New York's Penn Station.

Federal preservation law rests on a basic idea: Those who know their communities best have the right to be heard on how to reduce harm to historic sites as projects are planned.

The 1966 law is a case study for how principles of federalism are modeled in legislation.

When American history is on the line, hearing from the boots on the ground matters. The law also enshrines rights for tribes and indigenous communities to speak up for the protection of ancestral sites on federal lands.

The check in the preservation act to prevent federal overreach, known as Section 106, is now under attack. The required consultation process uniquely embraces in-person dialogue over written reports. Those with localized knowledge have a platform to share information with federal officials early in project planning when federal funds or permits are required.

This conversation reduces harm, helps avoid surprises, and generates buy-in to make projects more successful.

This consultation is now on the chopping block.

For the last several months, the threat was a proposed regulatory overhaul. But when broad opposition emerged, including nearly 1,000 community groups that joined the 106Strong Coalition, the sweeping overhaul was quietly stuffed into a permitting reform bill.

But to characterize the change as reform is misleading. It is a hollowing out of accountability for federal action with profound potential consequences for our history.

Under the bill, local consultation all but goes away unless the federal agency elects to a dialogue on its initiative.

The substitute is a report — a new paperwork requirement for federal officials that simply outlines expected harms. Ultimately, the project could move forward for any plausible reason the agency decides.

The change would clear the way for some of the most contentious recent projects around the nation's capital. But the impacts would be both far-reaching and close to home.

South Carolinians don't have to go far to find Section 106 success stories: A scaled-back federal courthouse in downtown Charleston, a Confederate stockade in Florence where American prisoners are buried, and the discovery of a Revolutionary battlefield in Chester County all relied on local knowledge informing federal permitting agencies.

Here in the Lowcountry, citizen input from the Preservation Society of Charleston, in consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has been critical to develop a sensitive plan for a storm surge barrier called the Battery Extension project.

Working with the Corps and the city of Charleston, Section 106 amplifies local voices to make sure this major resilience project is more than a rudimentary concrete wall.

The proposed solution will be a multifunction amenity, integrating seamlessly with history and protecting Charleston's architectural legacy — a key economic driver for the state.

The new law would clear the way for much less sensitive development by rewriting what harm to a historic place entails. Under the proposed process, the visual, atmospheric and auditory effects of a large industrial site would be irrelevant.

In other words, the hands of the permitting agency would be tied regardless of project's proximity to a significant historic place.

Across the country, Section 106 has proved time and again that direct engagement produces win-win solutions.

Let's defend this dialogue and ensure that the places that bind community life can survive short-term pressures to cut corners and hide behind another report.

Brian R. Turner is president and CEO of the Preservation Society of Charleston and a lecturer in preservation law at Clemson University. He is a co-author of "Historic Preservation Law," a publication of the American Bar Association. He lives in Charleston.

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HAPPENINGS

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FAMILY: Sarah Samuels Logan speaks to the Rotary Club of Manning during its Nov. 4 meeting about the history of Samuels Funeral Home and the funeral service profession. A framed photograph of her grandfather, Hayes Samuels, who served as Clarendon County coroner for 16 years, was among the family memorabilia she shared during her presentation.

(MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY/THE MANNING TIMES)

Rotary Roundup

Samuels Logan shares family legacy, funeral service insights

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

For Sarah Samuels Logan, funeral service has been part of her life for as long as she can remember. From helping carry flowers and move caskets as a young child to continuing her family's funeral business, she has followed a path shaped by generations of family members dedicated to serving the Clarendon County community.

Logan, who joined the Rotary Club of Manning over the summer, shared the history of Samuels Funeral Home and offered members a behind-the-scenes look at the funeral industry during the club's Nov. 4 meeting.

Founded in 1936 by her great-grandparents, Hayes F. Samuels Sr. and Glenelle Samuels, the Manning funeral home has remained a family business for 90 years. Her grandfather, Hayes Samuels, also served as Clarendon County coroner for 16 years.

A 2017 graduate of Manning High School, Logan attended the University of South Carolina Upstate before completing her mortuary studies at Piedmont Technical College in Greenwood in 2024.

Her introduction to the family business, however, began much earlier.

"My journey started when I was three years old, when I was pushing caskets and toting flowers," Logan told fellow Rotari-

See ROTARY | **13A**

Kelley Anne's celebrates six years of fashion, family and friendship

BY ALEX FEAGIN

What began as a lifelong passion for fashion has grown into six years of business, family traditions and friendships for Kelley Anne Steinman, owner of Kelley Anne's boutique in Santee.

Steinman opened the boutique Oct. 1, 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges of opening a business at that time, she believed Santee and the surrounding communities would welcome a locally owned boutique.

For Steinman, fashion has always been a family affair. Her parents, Bill and PJ Steinman, owned two women's boutiques: Fashion 200 in Tryon, North Carolina, and PJ's Fashions on Main in Landrum, South Carolina.

Growing up in the business, Steinman learned everything from purchasing merchandise and bookkeeping to providing customer service.

"I learned from the very best, my mom and dad," she said.

Before opening her own boutique, Steinman gained additional experience working at Gwynn's in Mount Pleasant and Brittons in Columbia. However, it was the years spent watching her parents that ultimately inspired her to follow in their footsteps.

"It's the same love for the business, the same passion for the business, and the same genuine love of how to treat people," she said.

When her parents retired to Santee, Steinman saw an opportunity to create something special for her mother. She wanted PJ to have a place where she could continue enjoying the fashion business without the responsibilities of ownership.

"I wanted to create a place where Mom could come at her leisure and enjoy working with people or seeing the pretty things," Steinman said. "She definitely doesn't have to be here as much as she is, but she's here a lot, and she just loves doing it."

Today, the mother-daughter duo welcomes customers who stop by not only to shop but also to visit, share a conversation or enjoy a cup of coffee.

One customer described the atmosphere that keeps her returning.

"I keep coming back not only for the fashion, but because of PJ and Kelley Anne and the way they make me feel not only as a customer, but as a friend," the customer said.

The boutique has also received recognition for its customer service and merchandise selection, including a Small Business Award in 2023 and recognition through Google Reviews. The honors continue a family tradition, as PJ was named Business Person of the Year in Tryon more than 20 years ago.

The business also supports the surrounding community through donations to local families in need, Santee Area Ministries Food Bank and local animal rescues.

Beginning in November and continuing through Christmas, Kelley Anne's will collect donations for those organizations. Those who contribute will receive a Kelley Anne's gift certificate as a token of appreciation.

As she reflects on the boutique's sixth anniversary, Steinman credits the customers, friends and family who have supported the business, including some whose relationships with the family began years before Kelley Anne's opened.

"Our customers are our friends, some that have shopped with us since my parents' store," she said. "Thank

See FASHION | **13A**



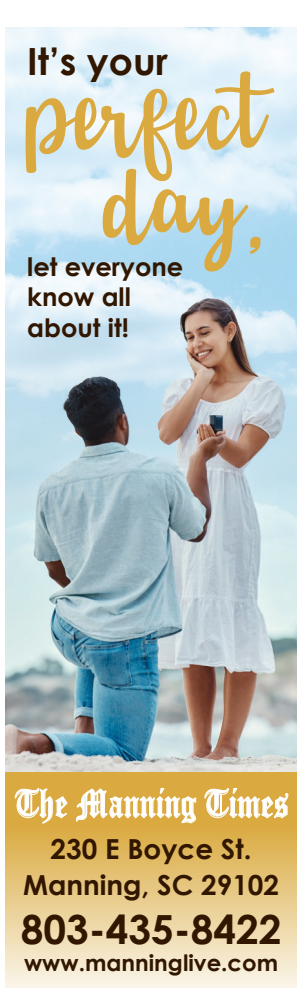


ANNIVERSARY: Top: Kelley Anne Steinman cuts the ribbon at the October 2020 grand opening of Kelley Anne's boutique in Santee, launching her business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bottom: Six years later, Steinman, right, stands with her mother, PJ Steinman, outside the boutique. The mother-daughter duo continues a family tradition in the fashion industry while building lasting friendships with customers.

(PROVIDED/KELLEY ANNE STEINMAN)









Summerton weighs long-term infrastructure plan to maximize $1.5M federal grant

Santee-Lynches urges town to prioritize water and sewer improvements, pursue additional funding

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

With aging water and sewer lines causing repeated leaks throughout town, Summerton officials are considering a long-term infrastructure plan that could help stretch $1.5 million in federal funding into a larger investment in the town's future.

Representatives from the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments addressed Summerton Town Council during its regular meeting Tuesday, Nov. 10, encouraging officials to develop a capital improvement plan that would identify the town's most pressing needs, establish priorities and position Summerton to pursue additional state and federal grants.

Dennis Cyphers, executive director of Santee-Lynches, explained that the town has received $1.5 million through the Economic Development Initiative-Community Project Funding program, a congressionally directed grant administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Rather than spending the entire allocation on individual repairs or improvements, Cyphers recommended using eligible portions of the funding to help secure additional grants, potentially increasing the amount available for infrastructure projects.

The proposal came shortly after Public Works Director Anthony Smith described ongoing problems with deteriorating water lines, including repeated leaks in several areas of town. Cyphers said those challenges illustrate why a coordinated approach is necessary.

"We get these large-scale funding, and really we're using it as a Band-Aid," Cyphers said, explaining that communities sometimes address immediate problems without accounting for future maintenance or preventive improvements.

He recommended developing a capital improvement plan covering five to 10 years, allowing council to establish a schedule for major projects, estimate costs and identify appropriate funding sources. Santee-Lynches would assist with the process, working with council members, town staff and residents to determine which improvements should take priority.

Among the projects already identified for consideration are rehabilitation of the town's water tower, water meter upgrades, replacement of deteriorating lines and improvements to a lift station. Cyphers cautioned that the $1.5 million allocation could be exhausted quickly if the town attempted to address major infrastructure projects without pursuing additional funding.

He suggested exploring opportunities through Community Development Block Grants and other state and federal programs, using the existing award as matching funds where permitted. The federal grant has an eight-year timeframe, providing an opportunity to coordinate improvements with multiple funding cycles.

However, the money must be spent within the grant's authorized purpose and approved budget. A capital improvement plan would not automatically allow the town to redirect the funding to unrelated projects, and any changes to the grant's scope or budget would remain subject to HUD requirements.

Councilman Gavin Allan supported establishing a plan, acknowledging that many of the town's infrastructure problems have been known for years.

"We know the infrastructure needs to be updated," Allan said. "But we need to put a plan in place. I mean, we need to get that ball rolling."

Councilman Michael Wells also encouraged a longer-term approach, saying the town should consider improvements that will serve residents over the next five to 10 years rather than focusing exclusively on immediate repairs.

Cyphers emphasized the importance of public participation, noting that Santee-Lynches has previously collected community input through Summerton's comprehensive planning process. Mayor Keith Bowman encouraged council members to schedule a workshop with the organization to discuss priorities and begin developing the plan, although no date was established during the meeting.

Aging water lines remain a concern

Earlier in the meeting, Smith told council that repeated leaks continue to challenge the town's Public Works Department. Councilwoman Elaine Wood questioned Smith about several problem areas, including recurring leaks near a church, along Buff Boulevard and on Parson Street.

Smith explained that some of the older lines have deteriorated to the point that repairing one section can place additional pressure on another, causing new leaks. He described one section of line that has required approximately 10 repair clamps and said replacing a portion of the pipe may be necessary to resolve the recurring problem.

Bowman acknowledged the town's aging infrastructure and said securing funding for more extensive water and sewer improvements must become a priority. He emphasized that many of the problems stem from aging systems that have been in place for decades and cannot be permanently resolved through repeated repairs.

During public comments, a resident also questioned the financial impact of the ongoing leaks. Council members explained that leaks occurring within the town's distribution system are not directly charged to individual customers' water bills, but they create expenses for the municipality through water loss, electricity, labor and repeated repairs.

Departmental reports unavailable

The meeting also proceeded without oral presentations of several regularly scheduled departmental reports. Water and Sewer Systems Operator Joey Oliver and Town Administrator Mary Adger were absent, and no explanation for their absences was provided during the meeting.

Mayor Keith Bowman told council members that the Town Government and finance reports were included in their packets and directed them to contact the administrator with questions. However, neither report was included in the meeting materials provided to The Manning Times. The Water and Sewer Operations report was also absent from those materials, and Public Works was the only department to provide an oral report.

See SUMMERTON | 12A

MANNING HIGH AFJROTC EARNS 'EXCEEDS STANDARDS' RATING

SUBMITTED

TManning High School's Air Force Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program has earned an "Exceeds Standards" rating following a recent unit assessment, recognizing the cadets and instructors for their leadership, discipline and commitment to excellence.

The program received a score of 90.3, equivalent to an A, according to a Nov. 4 announcement from Clarendon County School District. The assessment evaluates the overall effectiveness of AFJROTC units, including program management, cadet leadership and compliance with established standards.

The achievement reflects the work of Manning High School's SC-931 AFJROTC unit, which provides students opportunities to develop leadership skills, strengthen character and participate in community service while preparing for college, careers and military service.

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Ryan J. Glosson, an AFJROTC instructor, credited the cadets' resilience and determination for the program's success.

"When I think of the SC-931 AFJROTC program, I think of resiliency. We have an eclectic group of cadets who overcome challenges, embrace their differences, and demonstrate the Air Force motto, 'Excellence in All We Do,'" Glosson said. "Our 90.03% Exceeds Standards assessment reflects their dedication, perseverance, and commitment to excellence. I couldn't be prouder of this team."

Clarendon County School District Superintendent Dr. Shawn Johnson said the rating demonstrates the importance of high expectations, accountability and strong leadership in helping students succeed.

"Excellence is not simply something we talk about in Clarendon County School District, it is something we expect, model, and demonstrate through our actions," Johnson said. "Earning a 90.3 and an overall rating of 'Exceeds Standards' is a testament to the hard work, discipline, and commitment of our Manning High School AFJROTC cadets and instructors."

Johnson said the accomplishment also highlights the opportunities the program provides students to develop into future leaders.

Manning High School Principal Dr. Rodney McCorkle praised the cadets for their preparation, perseverance and teamwork, noting that their performance reflects positively on the entire school.

"Our AFJROTC cadets have demonstrated that excellence is achieved through preparation, perseverance, teamwork, and pride in everything they do," McCorkle said. "This outstanding rating is a direct reflection of their dedication and the leadership of our instructors."

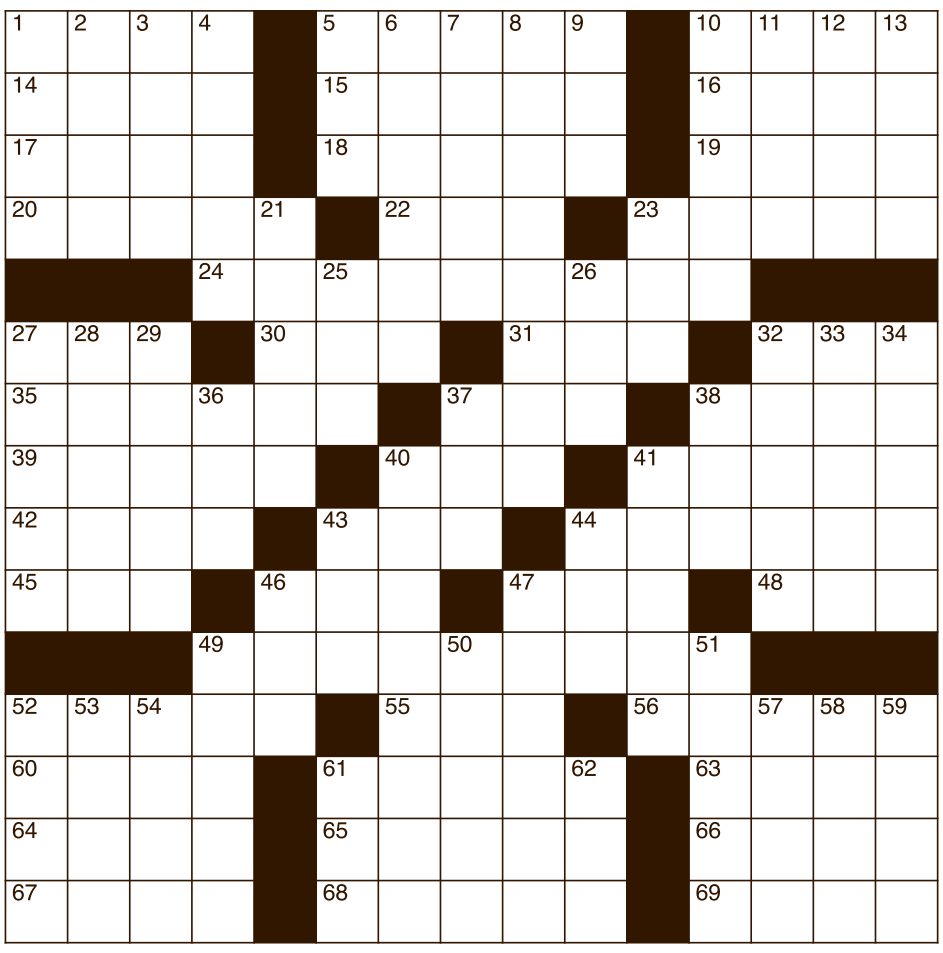
Beyond the assessment, the AFJROTC program emphasizes citizenship, self-confidence and service to the school and surrounding community. Through classroom instruction, leadership activities and hands-on experiences, cadets develop skills intended to serve them beyond high school.

District officials congratulated the cadets, instructors and school leadership on the achievement, recognizing the program's continued role in developing student leaders at Manning High School.

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As you read through this week's paper, keep your eyes open for our special Thanksgiving pig wearing a hat!
When you spot him, bring him by The Manning Times office & win a gift card to Piggly Wiggly to help with your holiday shopping!
Happy hunting, and good luck!
There can only be one winner a week! You can also only win ONE TIME!

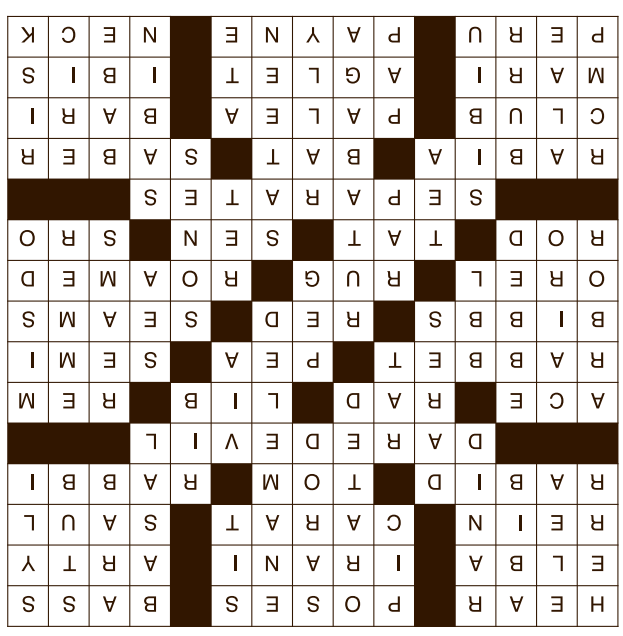
GAMEZONE



CLUES ACROSS
1. Perceive a sound
5. Pretends to be
10. Type of guitar
14. Actor Idris
15. A citizen of Iran
16. Creative
17. Keep under control
18. Weight unit for precious stones
19. You better call him
20. Fanatical
22. Male cat
23. Jewish spiritual leader
24. One who takes risks
27. A way to nail
30. Cool!
31. Progressive policy supporter
32. "Losing My Religion" rockers
35. Step-shaped recess
37. Round globular seed
38. Somewhat
39. Butterhead lettuces
40. Color at the end of the spectrum
41. Lines where fabrics are sewn together
42. Dodgers great Hershiser
43. Floor covering
44. Traveled aimlessly
45. Rocker Stewart
46. Body art
47. Congressman (abbr.)
48. No seats available
49. Categorizes
52. Iraq-Syria border town
55. Ballplayer's tool
56. Type of sword
60. Baseball team
61. Upper bracts of grass
63. Italian seaport
64. Ancient city in Syria
65. Shoelace tube
66. U. of Miami mascot is one
67. South American nation
68. "Nebraska" director Alexander
69. Upper body part

CLUES DOWN
1. German courtesy title
2. Ancient Greek City
3. Skin care manufacturer
4. A long-legged frog
5. Photo
6. Delivered a speech
7. Lute in northern Indian music
8. Decorated
9. Take a seat
10. Bottom layer
11. Type of horse
12. Ticket part
13. Defunct currency of Guinea
21. Challenges
23. Popular BBQ food
25. Subway rodent
26. By way of
27. Shady garden alcove
28. City in Egypt
29. __ and flowed
32. Large quantities of paper
33. Eurasian wheat
34. Act incorrectly
36. Layer of water right above sediment (abbr.)
37. Al Bundy's wife
38. Ocean
40. Large, round root
41. Sound units
43. Knock
44. Soak in water
46. Hot drink
47. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
49. Rumanian city
50. Come back from being down
51. Vaccine developer
52. Canadian law enforcers
53. Wings
54. "Perry Mason" actor Raymond
57. Small fry
58. __ Clapton, musician
59. Gamble
61. Semi-liquid food
62. Consumed food

▼ ▼ ▼ THIS WEEK'S ANSWER KEY ▼ ▼ ▼



			9					
					6			5
8					7	4		2
	3			7	9	1		
			1			6	2	
		8	3				4	
4		9		1				
6						2		
		1	8		3			

Level: Intermediate

4	9	5	3	6	8	1	2	7
1	8	2	4	9	7	3	5	6
7	6	3	5	1	2	9	8	4
9	4	7	2	5	3	8	6	1
3	2	6	8	4	1	5	7	9
8	5	1	6	7	9	4	3	2
2	1	4	7	3	5	6	9	8
5	7	9	6	8	4	2	1	3
6	3	8	1	2	9	7	4	5

FUN BY THE NUMBERS

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

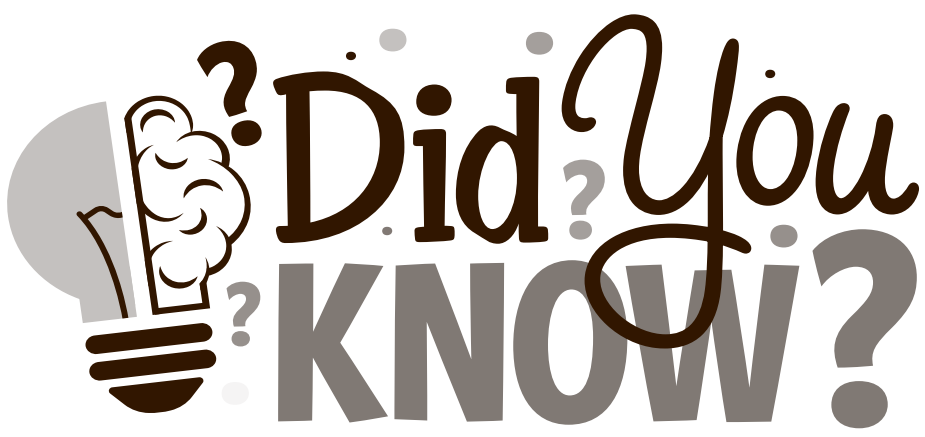
HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born in Connecticut on November 19, 1961. I am regarded as one of the most successful actresses of the 1990s, as well as the "queen of romantic comedies." I've starred opposite Billy Crystal, Tom Hanks and Hugh Jackman.

Answer: Meg Ryna



On November 4, 1922, British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered King Tut's tomb in Luxor, Egypt. The tomb of King Tutankhamen was discovered mostly intact and contained items that are now exhibited in Egypt's National Museum located in the city of Cairo.

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Pocotaligo River Health and Rehab
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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- Johnson James State Farm
- First Baptist Church of Manning
- The Manning City Fire Department
- The Manning Times, Mannin
- United Methodist Church
- Clarendon Behavioral Health Services
- Hand in Hand & Harvest Market,
- John's Place
- First Baptist Fellowship Hall

Contact:
tjgjlbfoundation@outlook.com
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AUCTIONS

HUGE ESTATE AUCTION
Sat., Nov. 14. 9:30AM. 7320 Windy Pines Rd., Orangeburg, SC. Estate of Mr. Charles Pettycort (deceased). Over 1000 items! Selling contents of shop, three 40 ft. containers, etc. Auction offers tremendous amount of tools, (2) Ford Transit vans, tons of shop equip., 1968 bread truck, neon signs, Snap-on tool carts, woodworking equip, auto mechanic tools, 5×8 lawn trailer, fifth wheel RV, generators, air compressors, CocaCola memorabilia, new outdoor furniture, antiques, nice home decor, bird baths, water fountains, holiday decor, 100s of new clay flower pots, lots of beverage bar items, pots/pans and much more! Two auctioneers selling simultaneously. Preview Fri., Nov. 13 from 11AM to 6PM.
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LEGAL NOTICES

SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF CLARENDON
KRYSTAL POLITE DOW,
VS.
DONALD MCKENZIE and BARBARA JEAN DUPREE,
IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
C/A NO.: 2026CP1400067
Plaintiff,
Defendants.
ORDER GRANTING SERVICE BY PUBLICATION
THIS MATTER coming before the Court upon the Motion of the Plaintiff for an Order permitting service of the Summons by publication upon the Defendant, Donald McKenzie, pursuant to S.C. Codes § 15-9-710 and § 15-9-740, and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court that the Defendant cannot, after the exercise of due diligence, be located or served within the State of South Carolina;
IT APPEARING that an Affidavit of Due Diligence detailing the efforts made to locate the Defendant has been submitted and filed in this cause of action, and it further appearing that The Manning Times, a newspaper of general circulation in Clarendon County, South Carolina, is the publication most likely to give notice to the Defendant:
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that the Motion is GRANTED, and service upon the Defendant, Donald McKenzie, shall be effectuated by publication as follows:
1. PUBLICATION: The Summons in this action shall be published in The Manning Times, a newspaper published in Clarendon County, South Carolina, once a week for not less than three (3) consecutive weeks.
2. MAILING: A copy of the Summons and Complaint, along with a copy of this Order, shall forthwith be deposited in the United States Mail, postage prepaid, directed to the Defendant at his last known address, which is: 55 Westend Street, Manning, South Carolina 29102-2021.
3. PROOF OF PUBLICATION & DELIVERY: Following the period of publication, an Affidavit of Publication provided by the newspaper must be filed with the Clerk of Court.
Additionally, an affidavit or proof of delivery verifying the mailing must be filed.
IT IS SO ORDERED.
Clarendon Common Pleas
Case Caption:
Case Number:
Type:
Krystal Polite Dow VS Donald Mckenzie, defendant, et al
2026CP1400067
Order/Publication
So Ordered
s/Shanita Brangman, Clerk of Court

(11/12-11/26)

SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF CLARENDON
KRYSTAL POLITE DOW,
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C/A NO.: 2026CP1400067
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COUNTY OF CLARENDON
KRYSTAL POLITE DOW,
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IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
C/A NO.: 2026CP1400067
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Defendants.
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Order/Publication
So Ordered
s/Shanita Brangman, Clerk of Court

(11/12-11/26)

SUMMONS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF CLARENDON
KRYSTAL POLITE DOW,
Plaintiff,
IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
VS.
DONALD MCKENZIE and BARBARA JEAN DUPREE,
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT
BARBARA JEAN DUPREE
Defendants.
TO THE DEFENDANT:
Barbara Jean Dupree
55 Westend Street
Manning, SC 29102
Barbara Jean Dupree
121 Kennedy Lane, Apt. 214
Manning, SC 29102
You are hereby summoned and required to answer the Complaint, Plaintiff's First Set of
Interrogatories and Request for Production of Documents to Defendant Barbara Jean Dupree, and Plaintiff's Request for Admissions to Defendant Barbara Jean Dupree in this action, a copy of which is attached hereto and served upon you, and to serve a copy of your answer to same upon the subscribed at 1244 East Boulevard, Charlotte, North Carolina 28203, within forty-five (45) days after the service of same, exclusive of the day of such service. If you fail to answer same within the forty-five (45) day period, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded therein and judgment will be taken against you by default.
This 5th day of February, 2026.
/s/ Mark L. Simpson
Mark L. Simpson
S.C. Bar No. 6801
Attorney for Plaintiff Chandler Volta, P.A.
1244 East Boulevard
Charlotte, North Carolina 28203
(704) 980-9999 (Main Line)
(704) 803-4732 (Direct Line)
mark@cvinjurylaw.com

(11/12-11/26)

SUMMONS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF CLARENDON
KRYSTAL POLITE DOW,
Plaintiff,
IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
VS.
DONALD MCKENZIE and BARBARA JEAN DUPREE,
Defendants.
TO THE DEFENDANT:
Donald McKenzie
55 Westend Street
Manning, SC 29102
Donald McKenzie
1013 Sloane Street, Lot 46
Turbeville, SC 29162
You are hereby summoned and required to answer the Complaint, Plaintiff's First Set of Interrogatories and Request for Production of Documents to Defendant Donald McKenzie, and Plaintiff's Request for Admissions to Defendant Donald McKenzie in this action, copies of which are attached hereto and served upon you, and to serve a copy of your answer to same upon the subscribed at 1244 East Boulevard, Charlotte, North Carolina 28203, within forty-five (45) days after the service of same, exclusive of the day of such service. If you fail to answer same within the forty-five (45) day period, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded therein and judgment will be taken against you by default.
This 5th day of February, 2026.
/s/ Mark L. Simpson
Mark L. Simpson
S.C. Bar No. 6801
Attorney for Plaintiff Chandler Volta, P.A.
1244 East Boulevard
Charlotte, North Carolina 28203
(704) 980-9999 (Main Line)
(704) 803-4732 (Direct Line)
mark@cvinjurylaw.com

(11/12-11/26)

FOCUS
FROM PAGE 3A

your family circumstances, finances or estate laws can make existing plans outdated. Review beneficiary designations, account titling and estate-planning documents to help ensure your assets transfer according to your wishes.

As your financial life becomes more complex, the connections between investment, tax and estate-planning decisions become more important. Year-end is an ideal time to evaluate those relationships and identify opportunities to strengthen the overall efficiency of your wealth strategy.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

FRAUD
FROM PAGE 1A

Their alleged offenses involved fraudulent short-term disability claims, falsified medical records and forged documents.

Robin Latee Smith, 42, of Williamsburg County, was subsequently charged Oct. 27 with forgery and presenting a false insurance claim involving between $2,000 and $10,000.

The South Carolina Department of Insurance requested the SLED investigation, which remains ongoing.

Johnson was booked into the Clarendon County Detention Center. The South Carolina Department of Insurance will prosecute the case, according to SLED.



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Ruth Kiser Watts



Turbeville – Ruth Kiser Watts, a beloved wife, mother, and grandmother, passed away on November 2, 2026, in Las Vegas, Nevada, following a battle with cancer. Born on April 21, 1959, in Kershaw, South Carolina, Ruth's life was a testament to love, family, and faith.

Ruth was the cherished daughter of Paul and Emmaline Kiser, both of whom preceded her in death. She is survived by her devoted husband, Jimmy, with whom she shared 38 beautiful years of marriage. Together, they built a life filled with love and joy, centered around their family. Ruth leaves behind three children-Jamie, Kaitlyn, and Kari-who were the pride and joy of her life. Her legacy of love and warmth continues through her precious grandchildren, Addy, Brooklyn, and Arya, who brought immense happiness to her heart.

Ruth was the loving sister to Charles, Ricky, and Shannon, who will fondly remember her as a pillar of strength and kindness. Her family was at the center of her world, and she cherished every moment spent with them, especially enjoying the laughter and love of her grandchildren.

A woman of faith, Ruth was a devoted member of the Turbeville Southern Methodist Church. Her commitment to her church community was unwavering , and she found great comfort and strength in her faith throughout her life. Ruth's kindness and compassion touched the lives of many, offering a comforting presence to those around her.

In her leisure time, Ruth found joy in the simple pleasures of life, particularly in the company of her family. Her home was often filled with the sound of laughter and the warmth of shared stories-a testament to the loving environment she nurtured. Ruth also found great joy in spending time fishing and tending to her garden.

The funeral will be held on Saturday, November 14, 2026 at 2:00 PM at the Southern Methodist Church, 1642 Main Street, Turbeville, SC, with burial in the church cemetery. A visitation will be held on Friday, November 13, 2026 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Floyd Funeral Home.

As we remember Ruth, let us celebrate the love and light she brought into our lives. Her memory will forever live on in the hearts of those who knew her, and her legacy of love will continue to inspire us all.

The family has entrusted Floyd Funeral Home, 136 East Main Street, Olanta, SC 29114 for the arrangements of Ruth Kiser Watts.

Edna Mae Andrews Cooper

Manning – Edna Mae Andrews Cooper, 68, transitioned Sunday, November 8, 2026, at her residence. She was born June 25, 1958, in New York, NY. A daughter of John Andrews and the late Tisha Mae Robinson-Andrews.



Gladys L. Cooper



Lynchburg – Gladys L. Cooper, 90, died Friday, November 6, 2026, at McLeod Regional Medical Center of the Pee Dee, Florence, SC. She was born July 20, 1936. A daughter of the late Eddie and Sarah Wheeler Cooper.

Minister Clinton W. McKenzie



Manning – Minister Clinton W. McKenzie, 68, passed away Monday, November 9, 2026, at his residence in Manning, SC. He was born January 9, 1958, in Olanta, SC. A son of the late Mildred Patrick McKenzie.

The family is receiving friends at his residence, 1748 Kingstree Hwy., Manning, SC.

The family has requested only potted plants be sent for Minister Clinton's service.

Mary Hendrix "Butch" Ardis



PINEWOOD – Mary Hendrix "Butch" Ardis, widow of James Henry Ardis, Sr., passed away on Monday, November 9, 2026, at her home.

Born December 24, 1938, in Ada, OK, she was the daughter of the late Ralph Glendon Hendrix and the late Martha Pauline McGuire Hendrix.

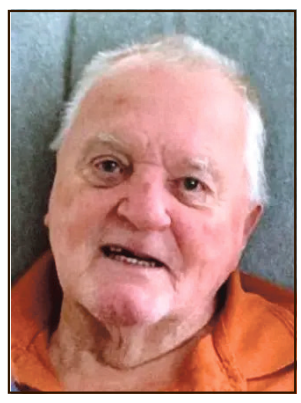
She is survived by her son, Jimmy Henry Ardis (Deborah) of Sumter; a grandson, James Henry "JJ" Ardis III (Katy) of Pinewood; a granddaughter, Kattie Hendrix (Corey) of Pinewood; and four great grandchildren, Layla, Harlyn, Boone and Rut.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Melody Ardis; and a son-in-law, Billy Ardis.

A visitation will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2026, at Stephens Funeral Home and other times at the residence, 5550 Elliott Road, Pinewood.

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

William Arthur Goodrow



ALCOLU – William Arthur Goodrow, 84, passed away on Thursday, November 5, 2026, at his home.

Born January 19, 1942, in Stamford, CT, he was a son of the late Wilbur Goodrow and the late Georgianna Goodrow. He was a US Marine Corps veteran and a retired police officer with the Bethel Police Department in Bethel, CT.

He is survived by a son, Ron R. Goodrow (Linda) of Alcolu; two daughters, Loretta "Laurie" Hardee (Riley) of Manning and Kacie Goodrow of Charleston; five grandchildren, Matthew, Travis, Ashley, Cody and Bailey; three great grandchildren; a sister, Barbara; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a daughter, Linda J. Luckner; and a brother, Donald Goodrow.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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

Daniel Joshua "Buddy" Lambert, Jr

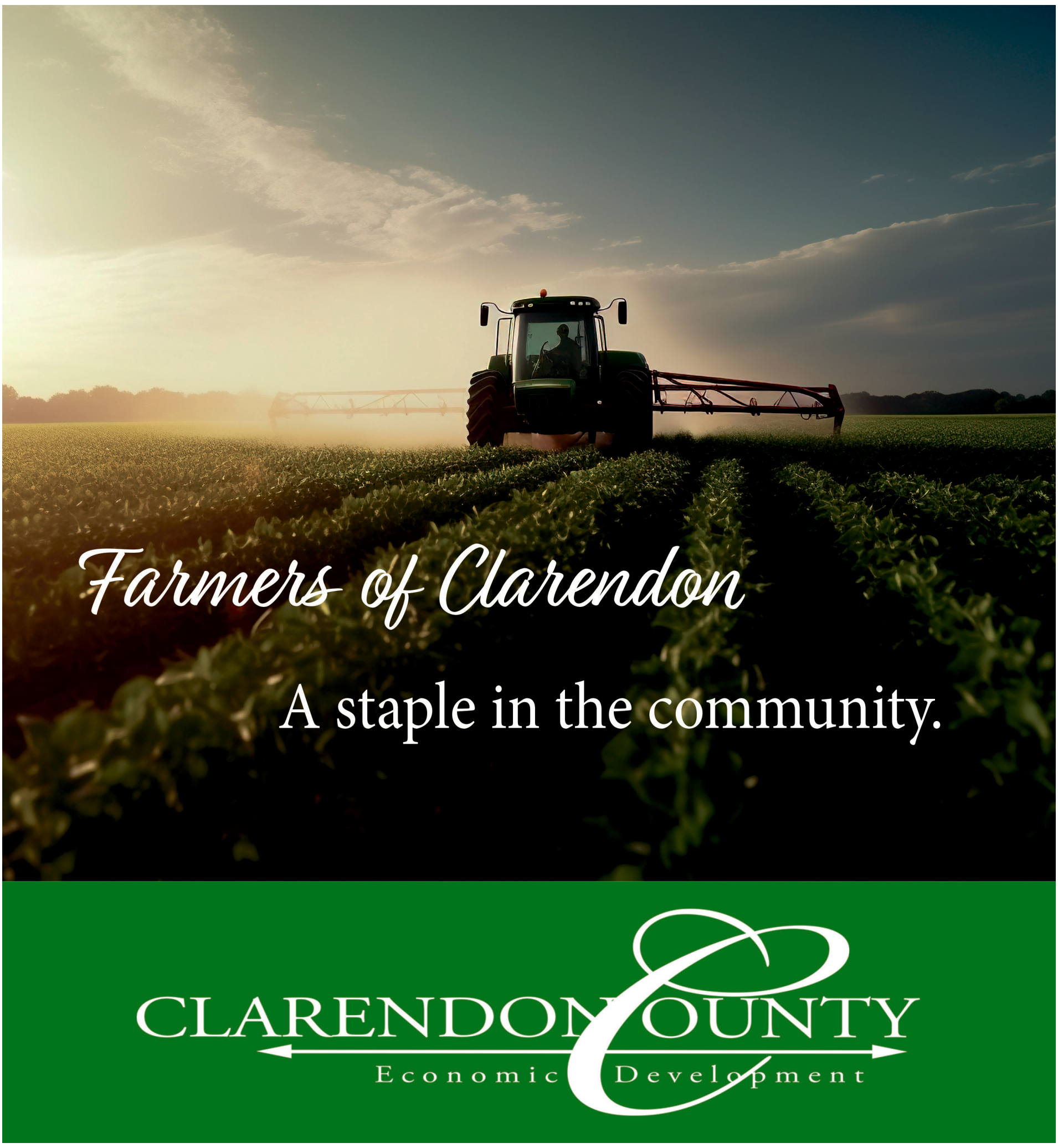


MANNING – Daniel Joshua "Buddy" Lambert, Jr., 84, husband of Sandra "Sandi" Jeannette Holliday Lambert, passed away on Sunday, November 8, 2026, at his home.

Born March 6, 1942, in Manning, he was a son of the late Daniel Joshua Lambert, Sr. and the late Pammie Edith Ridgill Lambert. He was a retired US Army National Guard veteran with over 20 years of service. He was a member of Solid Rock Baptist Church in Sumter.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years of Manning; sister-in-law, Kathie Benton; brother-in-law, Robbie Holliday; nephews, Francis Lambert (Terry), Mark Woodward (Susie), Bryan Woodward (Tracey), Larry Woodward (Nancy), C.B. "Tripp" Shorter (Jamie) and Bill Perkins (Emily); nieces, Janet Lambert (Dean), Lorinda Richter (Terry), Cheryl Brunslik and Pat Felder (Steve); a great nephew, Simon Perkins; and a cousin, JoAnn Warr (John).

Obituaries cont'd P13A





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PLAYOFFS: Clarendon Hall football players, coaches and cheerleaders celebrate their 34-0 playoff victory over Thomas Heyward Academy on Friday, Nov. 6. The Saints, who went winless last season, advanced to the SCISA Class A state semifinals with the victory.

(PROVIDED/CLARENDON HALL)

Saints, Monarchs advance as county teams open postseason play

Clarendon Hall reaches semifinals, Manning wins thriller; East Clarendon and Laurence Manning end seasons

STAFF REPORT

A year after finishing a winless season, Clarendon Hall is headed to the South Carolina Independent School Association Class A state semifinals following a 34-0 victory over Thomas Heyward Academy on Friday, Nov. 6, in Summerton.

The Saints improved to 5-6 and earned a trip to Dorchester Academy on Nov. 13. The victory continued a remarkable turnaround for a program that went 0-10 last season and entered this year on a 21-game losing streak.

Quarterback Joey Hatchell led a balanced offensive performance, completing seven of 12 passes for 116 yards and a touchdown while adding 44 rushing yards and another score. Junior Andrew Pritcher rushed for 82 yards and two touchdowns, while Talan Dymond contributed 27 yards and a touchdown.



COACH: Clarendon Hall head coach Shane Wallace talks with Saints players on the sideline during the team's 34-0 playoff victory over Thomas Heyward Academy on Friday, Nov. 6. The win advanced Clarendon Hall to the SCISA Class A state semifinals.

(PROVIDED/CLARENDON HALL)

Cole Richburg caught two passes for 63 yards, including a touchdown, as the Saints finished with 301 yards of total offense.

Clarendon Hall's defense was equally effective, limiting Thomas Heyward to 133 yards. Pritcher and Wyatt Simpson recorded eight tackles apiece, and Caleb Poplin forced a turnover. The shutout was the Saints' second against Thomas Heyward this season, following a 27-0 victory in their season opener.

The Saints' improvement has been particularly significant for their four seniors, who experienced the program's struggles before helping lead the team into the postseason. Much of the roster is expected to return next year, giving Clarendon Hall a foundation to build upon regardless of the semifinal outcome.

Dorchester Academy presents a difficult challenge. The Raiders defeated Clarendon Hall 60-16 during the regular season and enter the semifinal matchup 9-2 after defeating Carolina Academy 55-6 in the opening round.

The Saints will look to continue their turnaround Friday as they attempt to reach the state championship game.

Last-second touchdown lifts Manning into second round

Manning High School turned a late deficit into a playoff victory Friday, Nov. 6, when senior quarterback Lovell Stevenson connected with his younger brother, tight end Lovon Stevenson, for a touchdown with three seconds remaining.

The 13-yard scoring pass lifted the Monarchs to a 30-24 victory over Battery Creek in Beaufort, advancing Manning to the second round of the South Carolina High School League Class AA playoffs.

Trailing 24-21 with nine seconds left, Manning called a tight end delay play the team had practiced throughout the season but had not previously used in a game. Lovon Stevenson initially appeared to block before releasing into open space for the winning reception.

The late scoring drive began with junior A'majai Dow returning the kickoff to Manning's 45-yard line. Lovell Stevenson later connected with Jordyn Thompson for a 15-yard gain to the Battery Creek 20, helping put the Monarchs in position for the winning play.

David Leon added the extra point, and Manning recorded a safety on the final play to establish the final score.

Lovell Stevenson completed 14 of 19 passes for 234 yards and two touchdowns while adding a rushing score. CJ Robinson caught two passes for 89 yards and a touchdown, and Destin Thames led the rushing attack with 79 yards on 15 carries.

Defensively, Ethan Lowder recorded 12 tackles and a sack, while Jaden Woods intercepted a pass.

The Monarchs improved to 6-5 and will travel to Dillon on Nov. 13. The Wildcats defeated Manning 37-22 during the regular season after the Monarchs held a 14-10 halftime lead.

The rematch gives Manning another opportunity to advance beyond the second round after surviving one of its closest games of the season.

East Clarendon's season ends against Woodland

East Clarendon's football season ended Friday, Nov. 6, with a 34-3 loss to Woodland in the opening round of the South Carolina High School League Class AA playoffs.

The defeat marked the Wolverines' lowest offensive output of the season and came one week after a competitive performance against Region VI champion Dillon.

East Clarendon entered the playoffs as the No. 11 seed following a 29-13 loss to Dillon in its regular-season finale Oct. 30. The Wolverines remained within striking distance entering the fourth quarter, but the Wildcats pulled away to secure the region championship.

Against Dillon, quarterback Gavin White completed 24 of 43 passes for 288 yards and a touchdown, with two interceptions. Pierson Kelly caught four passes for 85 yards and a score, while Carter Burrows contributed five receptions for 63 yards.

Shamar Graham led the rushing attack with 68 yards on 14 carries, and Skyler Cornelius added a rushing touch-

See POSTSEASON | **13A**



Scott's Branch prepares for playoff opener against Lee Centrals

STAFF REPORT

Scott's Branch will begin its pursuit of a state championship Friday, Nov. 13, when the Eagles host Lee Central in the second round of the South Carolina High School League Class A Division II playoffs.

The Eagles enter the postseason with a 7-3 record after earning the No. 5 seed and a first-round bye. Lee Central advanced with a 68-30 victory over Whitmire, setting up the matchup at Spann Stadium in Summerton.

Under head coach Patrick Fleming, Scott's Branch finished 4-1 in Region VI, with its only conference loss coming against defending Class A state champion Bamberg-Ehrhardt. The Eagles have won seven of their last eight games, including a 42-0 victory over Edisto in their regular-season finale.

Sophomore quarterback Kaleb Minger has directed an offense featuring several experienced senior playmakers. Minger completed 134 of 218 passes for 1,675 yards and 18 touchdowns during the regular season.

His strongest performance came against Edisto, when he completed 23 of 33 passes for 270 yards and four touchdowns.

Senior running back Quintin Jackson has been a consistent threat both rushing and receiving. Jackson accumulated 1,040 rushing yards and 13 touchdowns on 119 carries while adding 32 receptions for 344 yards and five touchdowns.

Against Edisto, Jackson rushed for 72 yards and two touchdowns and caught passes for another 122 yards and two scores.

Senior Nyren Bowman, selected for the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl, leads the receiving corps with 37 catches for 712 yards and nine touchdowns. Keith Rogers has contributed 30 receptions for 468 yards and four scores while also returning three kickoffs and one punt for touchdowns.

Bowman has been equally important on defense, recording a team-high 109 tackles, including 11 for loss, along with three fumble recoveries.

Senior Danny Ragin has added 77 tackles, 13 tackles for loss, eight sacks and two interceptions. Ragin recently moved from defensive end to outside linebacker, giving the Eagles another experienced presence on defense.

Scott's Branch also enters the playoffs with a victory over Lake View, the No. 2 seed in the Division II bracket. The Eagles defeated Lake View 32-26 during the regular season, demonstrating their ability to compete with one of the higher-seeded teams in the field.

With several senior leaders playing their final postseason, Scott's Branch will look to extend its season and move closer to the program's championship goal.



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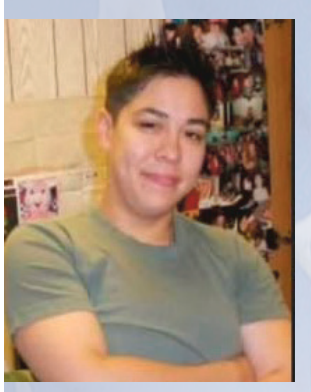
In honor of Veterans Day, The Manning Times invited readers to share photographs and tributes recognizing the veterans who hold a special place in their lives. These are their stories, shared by the people who know and love them.



AUBREY ARD

Aubrey Ard of Manning served six years in the U.S. Navy and 16 years in the Army National Guard.
"I am very proud of him for serving in two branches of the military."

SUBMITTED BY JANIE ARD, WIFE



KATHY CARMONA

Kathy Carmona served in the U.S. Army during the Iraq War and is now battling liver failure.
"My sister, my hero," wrote Cynthia McCoy. "She has a contagious smile, a huge heart and believes in fighting for what's right."
McCoy also expressed her gratitude to her sister and all veterans for their service.

SUBMITTED BY CYNTHIA MCCOY, SISTER



STEPHEN DOOLEY

Stephen Dooley served 14 years in the U.S. Army and Maryland National Guard, traveling around the world and completing two tours in Iraq.
He was stationed in Hawaii, where he met his wife.
"I am a proud wife. Thank you to everyone who served."

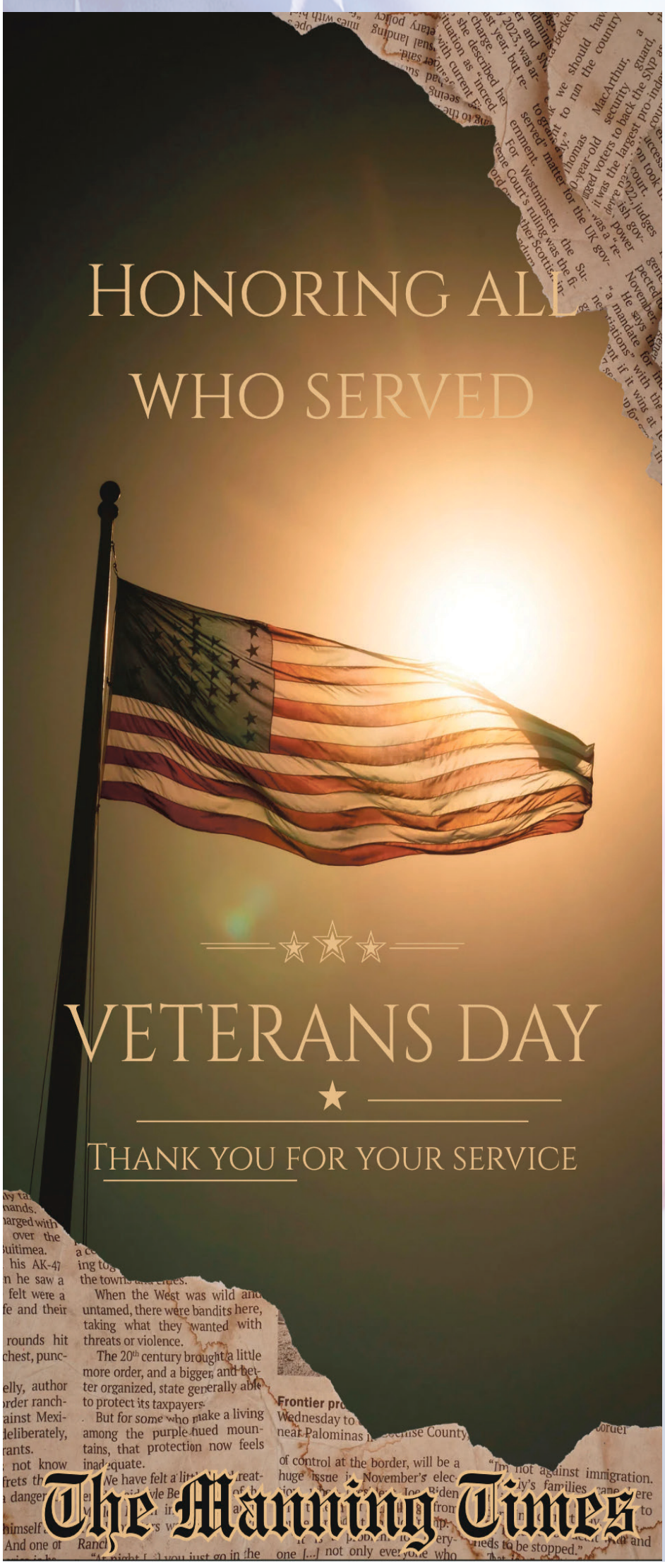
SUBMITTED BY HEATHER KENNEDY DOOLEY, WIFE



MASTER SGT. MIKE GUDE

Mike Gude joined the U.S. Air Force to build a better life for his family. His service took them around the world, though deployments meant long stretches away from home. He served during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.
"He's always been my hero. He will always be my hero. Love you, Dad!"

SUBMITTED BY AMBER GUDE MURLEY, DAUGHTER





DAVID A. JONES

David A. Jones served in the Army National Guard before retiring.
Though he has since passed away, his daughter remembers him with love and admiration.
"My dad ... was my hero and the best dad."

SUBMITTED BY TENA MARIE MCELVEEN, DAUGHTER



MASTER SGT. ROY "REGGIE" MCGUIRE II

Roy "Reggie" McGuire II served 20 years in the U.S. Air Force before retiring.
"Your service to our country is something we will always be proud of, but the way you continue to serve and love the people around you speaks just as much about your character."
"We love you more than words can say, and we are so thankful that we get to call you ours."

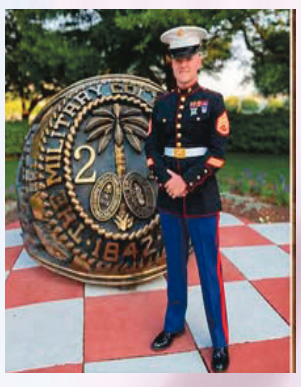
SUBMITTED BY MCKINZIE MCGUIRE, WIFE, AND THEIR CHILDREN



WILLIAM MUNRO

William Munro served 20 years in the U.S. Navy.
His daughter honors his unwavering dedication, willingness to work hard and commitment to caring for his family.
"He's the most genuine, most precious and most loving individual I've ever met!"

SUBMITTED BY DEANNA MUNRO, DAUGHTER



GUNNERY SGT. SAMUEL NABHOLZ

Samuel Nabholz served as a gunnery sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps, including a deployment to Afghanistan. Today, he continues serving as a K-9 deputy with the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office.
"His commitment to service didn't end when he took off his Marine uniform — it simply took on a new form. We are incredibly proud of him!"

SUBMITTED BY ROBIN MCALEER NABHOLZ



ROBERT NOLLER

Robert Noller enlisted in the U.S. Air Force immediately after graduating from high school, serving from 2016 to 2022.
"My son, Robert Noller, is my hometown hero. It takes a brave person to sign up to protect our country."

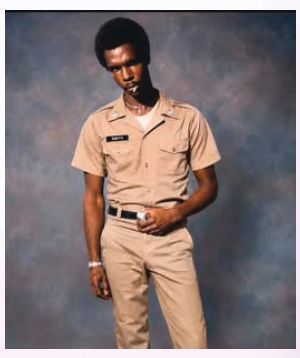
SUBMITTED BY HEATHER SCHEER NOLLER, MOTHER



DARYL RUCKER

Daryl Rucker served 12 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, from 1980 to 1992. One of his most treasured memories was visiting Iwo Jima and standing where Marines fought during World War II.
"Can't thank him enough for his service and sacrifice. Thank you can never be enough."

SUBMITTED BY VALLEY COOPER RUCKER, WIFE



1ST SGT. ALEXANDER SMITH SR.

Alexander Smith Sr. served 16 years in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era and later retired from the Army National Guard.
His wife submitted his tribute in recognition of his years of military service.

SUBMITTED BY QUNDA SMITH, WIFE



RANNY STEPHENS

Ranny Stephens of Manning served during the Vietnam War.
His niece shared his photograph in remembrance of his service and the place he continues to hold in his family's hearts.
"We miss him every day."

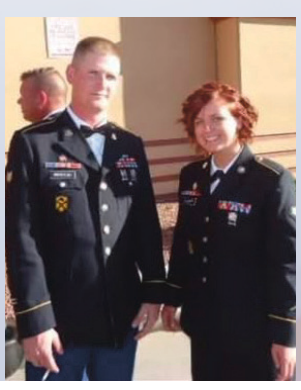
SUBMITTED BY AMANDA BROAD, NIECE



COMMAND SGT. MAJ. CARROLL WELCH

Carroll Welch served 37 years in the U.S. Army, including service with the 131st, 132nd, 133rd and 134th Military Police companies. He was awarded the Bronze Star.
His daughter describes him as selfless and dedicated to his service.
"Couldn't be any more proud to call him my father."

SUBMITTED BY DANIELLE JACOBS, DAUGHTER



BRAD AND VANESSA WINSTEAD

Brad and Vanessa Winstead met while deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, with the U.S. Army. Their friendship grew into marriage and a family.
Together, they've celebrated their child's accomplishments as a straight A-B student while honoring another child, whom Brad describes as Clarendon County's first pediatric organ donor.
"No other soldier I'd rather have my back. Go Army! Beat Navy!"

SUBMITTED BY BRAD WINSTEAD

EAGLE
FROM PAGE 2A

virus, and outbreaks in affected areas can persist for several weeks or months.

Wildlife officials are urging residents to avoid handling sick or dead wild birds and to keep pets away from affected animals. Carcasses should generally be left undisturbed, and anyone who must move or bury one should wear appropriate protective equipment. SCDNR does not provide carcass collection or removal services.

Although the risk of transmission to humans is considered low, officials continue to recommend avoiding direct contact with sick or dead birds. Additional information about potential human health risks and precautions is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

SCDNR said it will continue monitoring avian influenza activity in South Carolina's wild bird populations. Updated detection data and additional information are available through the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at aphis.usda.gov.



SUMMERTON
FROM PAGE 5A

Council approves minutes from special meeting

Council also approved minutes from its Oct. 28 special called meeting, during which members entered executive session to discuss personnel matters and contractual and legal issues.

According to the minutes, council subsequently voted unanimously to enter into an agreement with URCPA Consulting Services for accounting services. Members also approved a technical assistance agreement with Santee-Lynches related to the town's HUD grant and voted unanimously to separate from an employee identified only as "employee A."

The minutes do not identify the employee, explain the circumstances surrounding the separation or provide financial terms for the consulting and technical assistance agreements.

Upcoming community events

Bowman also reminded residents of several upcoming community events, including the town's Community Thanksgiving Dinner, scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 14, from noon to 2 p.m.

Summerton's Christmas parade is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 13, with festivities from 3 to 8 p.m. and the parade beginning at 5 p.m.

Town Hall will be closed Wednesday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27, for Thanksgiving.

RESULTS
FROM PAGE 1A

firmed that none of the original absentee ballots had been returned, allowing the provisional ballots to be counted.

The board also accepted one failsafe ballot from a voter who qualified under state law governing certain address changes, along with four ballots from eligible military and overseas voters that had been prepared for scanning but not yet included in the results.

Other provisional ballots were rejected after staff reviewed voter registration records and the circumstances under which they were cast. Five were rejected because the individuals were not registered in Clarendon County, seven because the voters registered after the deadline and three because they voted in the wrong precinct.

One additional ballot was rejected after officials investigated a voter whose record showed a ballot had already been cast. Staff determined that three individuals with similar names had voted and recommended against counting the additional ballot.

All recommendations were approved unanimously.

Curtis also reported that an emergency ballot omitted from the election-night count had been identified and included in the updated results. Board members reviewed polling place and early voting reconciliation records before certification.

Following the review, Chairman Edward Gamble III asked whether a recount was necessary. None was recommended, and the board unanimously certified the results.

Several races remain close in Clarendon

The official canvass produced small but significant changes in several contests, although the outcomes of the county's contested races remained unchanged.

In the governor's race, Republican Alan Wilson finished with 6,714 votes to Democrat Jermaine Johnson's 6,704, narrowing the local margin from 13 votes to 10.

Republican David Stumbo received 6,783 votes to Democrat Richard Hricik's 6,736 in the attorney general's race, a difference of 47 votes compared with 50 on election night.

Democratic incumbent Patricia Pringle's lead in the county auditor's race increased slightly, from 144 votes to 147. Pringle received 6,835 votes to Republican Kimberly Herbert's 6,688.



In South Carolina House District 64, Republican Rep. Fawn Pedalino carried Clarendon County with 6,880 votes to Democrat Michele Demery's 6,680, a margin of 200 votes. Demery nevertheless won the districtwide contest after carrying the Sumter County portion of the district.

Other close county results included the state treasurer's race, where Republican Curtis Loftis defeated Democrat Vincent Coe locally by 116 votes, and the secretary of state's race, where Republican Mark Hammond received 185 more votes than Democrat Jason Belton.

Democrat Sylvia Wright carried Clarendon County in the superintendent of education race by 162 votes over Republican Ellen Weaver.

Straight-party voting favored Democrats, with 5,301 Democratic straight-party ballots compared with 4,019 Republican straight-party ballots.

The certified results conclude Clarendon County's canvassing process for the Nov. 3 general election.

What are provisional and emergency ballots?

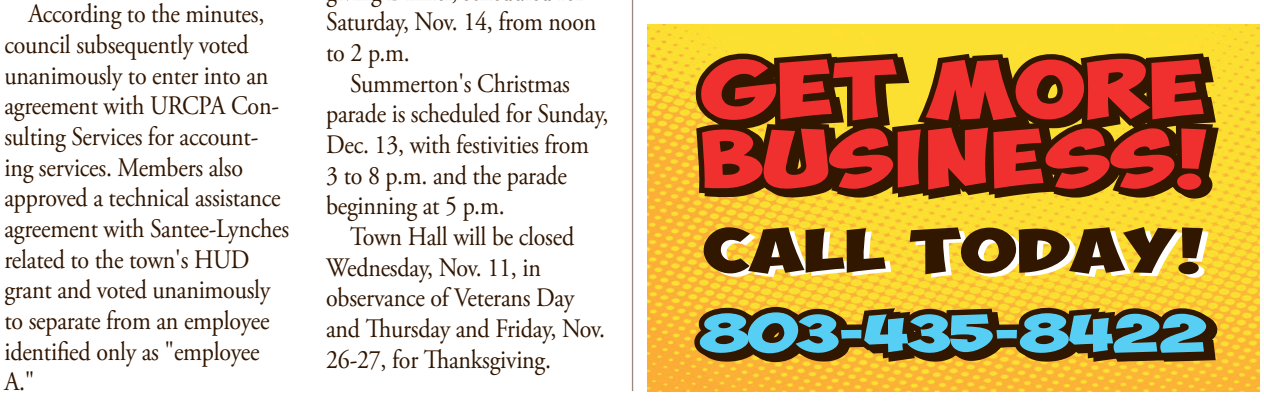
A provisional ballot allows a person to vote when election officials cannot immediately verify eligibility. The ballot is kept separate until election officials investigate the circumstances, and the county Board of Canvassers determines whether it can legally be counted.

A failsafe ballot is available to certain registered voters who have moved without updating their address. Depending on their circumstances, they may be eligible to cast a full or limited ballot under South Carolina law.

An emergency ballot is a backup paper ballot used when regular voting equipment or procedures cannot be used. Once normal processing is available, eligible emergency ballots are scanned and included in the election totals.











OBITUARIES
FROM PAGE 8A

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his in-laws, Harmon and Dorothy Holliday; a brother, Neville Lambert and wife, Pat; two sisters, Betty Ann Woodward and husband, Art, and Joyce Shorter and husband, C.B.; two nephews, Michael Lambert and John Brunslik; and a niece, Pam Porter.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2026, in the chapel of Stephens Funeral Home with Pastor Larry Hummel officiating. Burial will follow at Clarendon Memorial Gardens.

Nephews will serve as pallbearers.

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 Pat Felder, 1468 Peggy Lane, Manning.

Memorials may be made to Solid Rock Baptist Church, 960 Santa Fe Trail, Sumter, SC 29154.

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

James Black Jr.

Charlotte, NC – James Black Jr., 60, passed away Saturday, November 7, 2026, in Charlotte, NC. He was born March 19, 1966, in Manhattan, NY. A son of James Black Sr. and the late Martha Gaymon Black Ragin.



POSTSEASON
FROM PAGE 9A

down. Defensively, Crosby Timmons recorded six tackles and broke up a pass, while Avery Lowery recovered a fumble.

East Clarendon was unable to carry that offensive production into its postseason opener against Woodland, which advanced to face Philip Simmons in the second round.

The Wolverines finished the 2026 season with a 4-7 overall record and a 1-4 mark in Region VI. Their victories came against Scott's Branch, Mullins, Hannah-Pamplico and Lake City, including shutouts against Hannah-Pamplico and Lake City.

The season ended with consecutive losses to Dillon and Woodland, but East Clarendon earned another postseason appearance under head coach Larry Cornelius.

Late touchdown ends Laurence Manning's playoff run

Laurence Manning Academy's football season came to an end Friday, Nov. 6, after Porter-Gaud scored in the closing minutes to defeat the Swampcats 15-10 in the opening round of the South Carolina Independent School Association Class 4A playoffs.

The loss ended Laurence Manning's first season under head coach David Rankin and reversed the outcome of the teams' regular-season meeting, which the Swampcats won 10-7.

Laurence Manning held a 10-9 lead entering the final four minutes but was forced to punt with 2:03 remaining. Two plays later, Porter-Gaud quarterback Cam Werntz connected with Amir Chisolm on a 50-yard screen pass for the winning touchdown. A failed two-point conversion left the Swampcats trailing by five with 1:36 to respond.

Quarterback Grainger Powell moved Laurence Manning toward midfield on its final possession, connecting with Scoop Dennis for several completions. The drive ended on an incomplete fourth-down pass, allowing Porter-Gaud to run out the clock.

The teams were tied 3-3 at halftime after Daniel Vargas converted a 30-yard field goal for Laurence Manning. Porter-Gaud added two field goals in the second half to build a 9-3 advantage.

The Swampcats answered with a 65-yard scoring drive, highlighted by a 34-yard completion from Powell to Connor Carter. Pierson Gamble finished the possession with a 3-yard touchdown run, putting Laurence Manning ahead 10-9 with 8:55 remaining.

The Swampcats' defense kept the game close throughout, including sacks by Cole Yomtob and Asher Sanders during the first half.

Porter-Gaud advanced to face top-seeded Hammond in the Class 4A semifinals, while Laurence Manning concluded its 2026 campaign.

ROTARY
FROM PAGE 4A

ans. "What a childhood!"

Although she did not fully understand the nature of the business at that age, Logan said growing up around hardworking family members helped shape her own commitment to the profession.

During her presentation, she explained that funeral directors handle far more than the services families attend. Their responsibilities include coordinating arrangements, preparing remains for burial or cremation, completing death certificates and other legal documents, maintaining records and ensuring compliance with local, state and federal regulations.

Another important aspect of the profession is pre-planning, which allows individuals to make decisions about their own funeral arrangements in advance rather than leaving those choices to grieving relatives.

Samuels Funeral Home offers guaranteed pre-planning contracts, which lock in the cost of selected services at the time arrangements are made. Additional charges may apply if a family later chooses upgrades.

To give members a closer look at the process, Logan brought several examples of materials used by the funeral home, including a casket key, memorial keepsakes, obituary programs, funeral planning guides and paperwork required for funeral arrangements.

She explained the importance of accurately completing death certificate information and obtaining the proper authorizations before embalming or other preparations begin.

The funeral home also provides assistance with veterans' funeral arrangements, cremation services and personalized memorial materials. Logan said families increasingly choose booklet-style obituary programs, which provide additional space for photographs, poems and personal memories.

Responding to questions from members, Logan said the funeral home employs approximately eight full-time staff members, along with part-time funeral attendants. The business handled 186 funerals in 2025 and had already handled 159 in 2026 at the time of her presentation.

While the work requires considerable preparation and attention to detail, Logan emphasized its emotional demands.

"It's a very emotional strain that's on the staff members," she said, explaining the importance of having family and other support systems outside the workplace.

Funeral professionals must often set aside their own concerns to focus on families experiencing some of the most difficult moments of their lives, she explained.

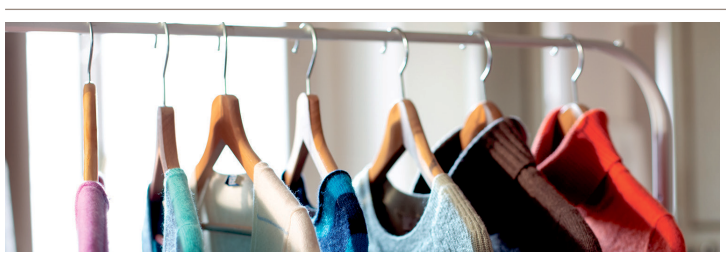
Logan also discussed her interest in restorative work, including cosmetics and other preparations intended to help deceased individuals look as their families remember them.

Beyond funeral services, the business offers free notary services, a practice Logan said reflects her grandfather's belief in finding ways to give back to the community.

"I love funeral service because it's a way to give back to our community," she said.

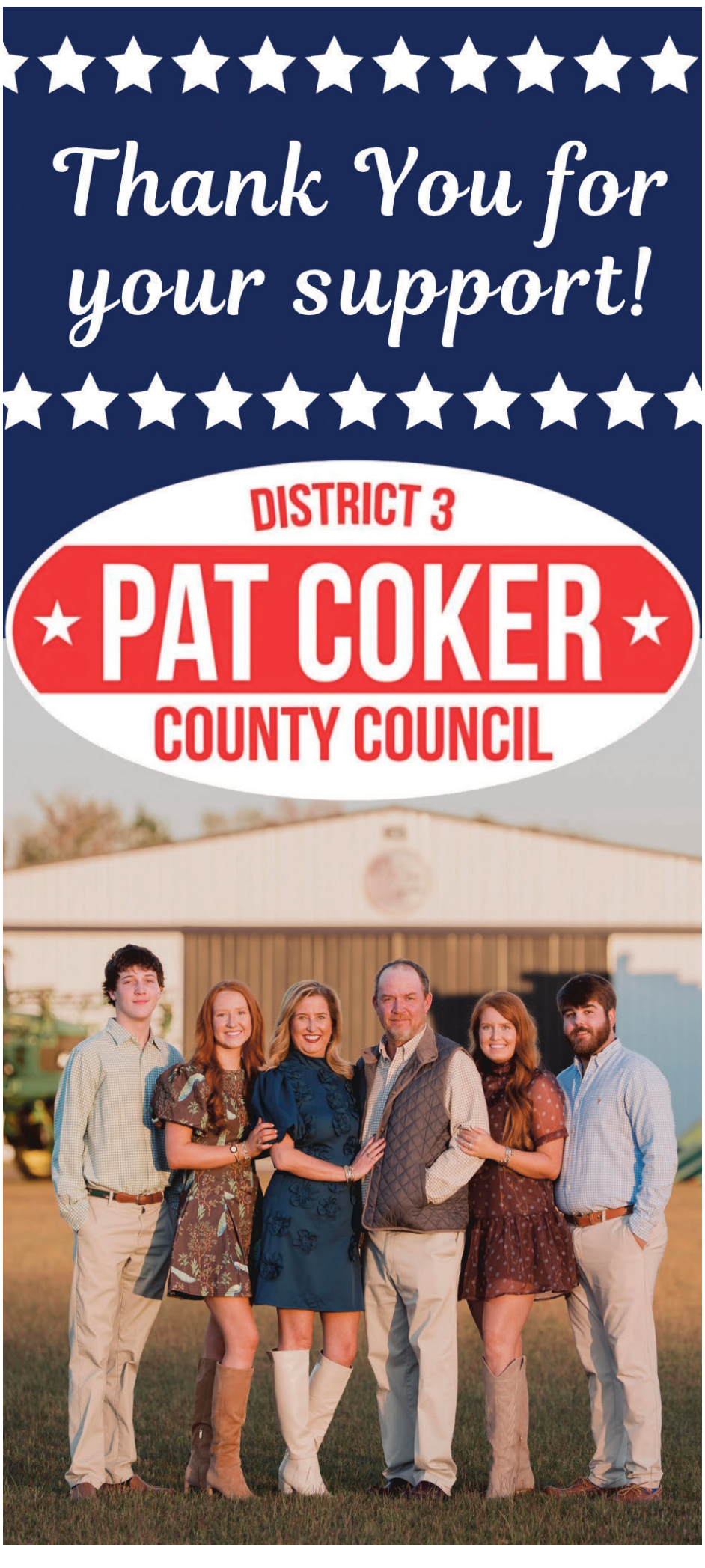
As she continues the work begun by her great-grandparents, Logan said preserving that legacy remains both a responsibility and a source of pride.

"At Samuels Funeral Home, we do more than provide funeral services," she said. "We honor lives, comfort families, and serve our community with compassion.



FASHION
FROM PAGE 4A

you all for making Kelley Anne's such a success and a place of fellowship, a place where generations of women love to come shop!"





PARK
FROM PAGE 1A

nonprofit organization or public entity.

The report identifies substantial rehabilitation needs at Summerton High School, including roof deterioration, water infiltration and suspected mold in the auditorium, along with repairs to windows and aging mechanical systems. Plans for the building's future use remain preliminary.

Remembering the sacrifices

For Marguirite DeLaine, chairperson of the Briggs-DeLaine-Pearson Foundation, the symposium was an opportunity to recognize the families whose efforts helped bring about Brown v. Board of Education and the personal consequences they faced.

The Clarendon County case, Briggs v. Elliott, began with efforts by Black parents to obtain school transportation and equal educational opportunities for their children. Their fight eventually became a broader legal challenge to segregation itself.

During her remarks, DeLaine recounted the retaliation faced by residents who supported the movement, including job losses, threats and families being forced from their homes.

Among the examples she shared was Annie Gibson, a petitioner who lost her job and whose family was ordered to leave its home on Christmas Eve. DeLaine also described threats against the Rev. Joseph A. DeLaine and the community members who took turns guarding his home.

The symposium brought together representatives of the five cases to visit the communities where the legal challenges began and hear firsthand accounts of their histories. DeLaine encouraged attendees to consider what those experiences mean for the generations that followed.

"Belonging requires commitment," DeLaine said, emphasizing awareness, listening, involvement, integrity and sacrifice.

"The war is not won yet, ladies and gentlemen. The choice is ours," she said.

Williams also emphasized the importance of allowing communities to help shape how their histories are presented. He said the National Park Service has sought input from residents and representatives of the five communities to identify the experiences and stories that should be shared with visitors.

The park's August 2026 foundation document identifies the Summerton schools as fundamental historical resources, with preservation, education and community engagement among the priorities for their future management.

What comes next

Despite the progress in planning, significant steps remain before the proposed facilities can become a reality.

The National Park Service has not yet acquired either Summerton property, although the agency hopes to complete the acquisitions from the Clarendon County School District in 2027, according to information provided to The Manning Times.

The expansion was authorized through the Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park Expansion and Redesignation Act, signed into law by President Joe Biden in May 2022. The legislation added the two Summerton schools to the park's authorized boundaries and established affiliated areas associated with the other cases.

However, federal authorization does not automatically provide the funding needed to rehabilitate or operate the properties.

The National Park Service confirmed that Congress has not allocated additional operating funding for the Summerton sites.

Major rehabilitation projects compete for construction funding within the National Park Service, while Congress may also appropriate money for individual projects.

The Great American Outdoors Act's Legacy Restoration Fund, which previously supported deferred maintenance projects across the national park system, expired last fiscal year. Efforts are underway in Congress to reauthorize the program, but the agency said the park must also await decisions on the federal fiscal 2027 budget.

The October historic structures report provides a roadmap for preserving the buildings, identifying immediate repairs and longer-term improvements needed to adapt them for public use. The park's foundation document establishes how their stories will fit into the broader national historical park.

While the agency hopes to acquire the properties in 2027, no timeline has been established for completing the rehabilitation or opening the buildings as National Park Service facilities. Those steps will depend on available funding and the extensive work required to prepare the historic schools for public use.

For a community whose families helped change the course of public education in America, the buildings represent more than a chapter in history. Preserving them would ensure that the courage, sacrifices and determination of those families remain part of the story told to generations still to come.

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