



News & Press

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QUOTE

'All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.'

EDMUND BURKE

75¢

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Carolina Bank officials planning new \$1.3 million downtown facility

By Bobby Bryant
Editor
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Darlington may be losing one bank on the Public Square, but it's going to gain another.

About a month after financial giant Wells Fargo revealed plans to close its branch at 58 Public Square, the Pee Dee-focused Carolina Bank says it will construct a "modern banking facility" at the intersection of North Main Street and Orange Street, adjacent to one of its older, existing branches that will be phased out.

The new one-story building, estimated to cost about \$1.3 million, will replace the 60-year-old next-door branch once construction is finished, hopefully by late summer, said Jamie Morphis of Hartsville, senior vice president for Carolina Bank.

"We're excited about it," Morphis said. "Our employees are excited about it."

In a letter sent to some Darlington-area residents over the past few weeks, Carolina Bank said: "Darlington is our home, and we are committed to seeing it grow and flourish. That's why we are investing in our com-

munity by building a new Carolina Bank in downtown Darlington. ... We are looking forward to offering our customers the services you've come to rely on in a modern banking facility."

Investing in Darlington is exactly the note the bank wants to hit, Morphis said, now that the city has already lost one national bank (Bank of America) and is going to lose Wells Fargo in February, as well as seeing changes at other banks.

"It's a lot of changing of hands," Morphis said.

He said Carolina Bank executives felt this was the

right time to show a commitment to Darlington.

The plan has been in discussions for a couple of years, Morphis said.

He said Carolina Bank would have proceeded with the plan even if voters had approved a referendum to raze the 1960s-era Courthouse and build a new one - a proposal that, if it had passed, could have meant massive amounts of construction/demolition work a few dozen yards from the site of the new bank.

That site now holds nothing but an ATM; it was once the location of a Hardee's.

Morphis said officials hope to begin construction in January, and expect it will take six to eight months to complete. As for the building's look, Morphis said it will be very similar to Carolina Bank's office on Irby Street in Florence.

In the letter sent out to promote the new bank, Carolina Bank officials emphasized the fast-changing financial landscape.

"You want to work with people you know and trust," the letter says. "To one of the big banking chains, you are simply an account number. If that big bank is swallowed up

by another, bigger bank, you are further reduced to a line of code ... and the location of your bank is just another spot on their map."

"That isn't true at Carolina Bank," the letter continues. "Founded right here in Darlington County, Carolina Bank has been independently owned and locally operated for over 85 years."

"Our branch managers and staff are your neighbors. We are the people who shop with you, sit next to you at church, and who you see at football games and Christmas parades."



Sheila Baccus, Elaine Reed and John Segars get sworn in during the Jan. 2, 2018, Darlington City Council meeting. PHOTO BY MELISSA ROLLINS

help you become more resilient to further damage from other disasters," Odom said.

"Darlington County developed the first Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2005 and that was approved by FEMA in 2007.

That plan was written by Pee Dee COG (Council of Governments) and when they developed it they did it for the county as well as the four municipalities in the county. In 2012 when they did a revised plan, it is renewed every five years, the planning team ... decided that instead of having a generic plan like what Pee Dee COG had done they were going to make one that was more specific to the disasters that come in to Darlington County based on historical data and the experience of those who were on the planning team."

'We need more space'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School celebrated the completion of a new building that will allow its student body a bit of room to ease those growing pains, and allow the school to allocate improved classroom spaces for its science and math curriculum.

"We've been growing quite rapidly for the past few years. I've been here for seven years, and we've gone from 99 students to 273 students... and our goal is toward 300-plus students. That growth has precipitated the idea that we need more space, and particularly an area where we can expand our math and science programs with more classroom space," said Ed Hoffman, Head of School for Trinity-Byrnes.

Trinity-Byrnes offers 15 Advanced Placement courses, and a number of rigorous college preparatory courses focused on the growing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) field of study.

Developing Fourth Street in Hartsville

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their Jan. 9 regular monthly meeting, Hartsville City Council approved the purchase of several parcels of land as part of the city's plan to further develop the Fourth Street corridor.

These properties were approved for purchase through passage of the following ordinances:

No. 4318 approves the purchase of 0.083 acres located at 316 Reservoir Street from Heyward Gainey for \$65,000.

No. 4320 approves the purchase of property at 313 Reservoir Street and the corner of Coker Street from Danny L. Byrd and David C. Byrd for \$110,000.

No. 4321 approves the purchase of property located at 315 Chinaberry Drive and the corner of Reservoir Street from Shirley G. Anderson for \$60,000.

No. 4322 approves the purchase of property located at 311 Reservoir Street from the estate of Linda D. Byrd for up to \$70,000.

The future of the Courthouse

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their Feb. 5 meeting, Darlington County Council planned to hear a presentation on the results of several listening sessions related to the County Courthouse, which were held across the county in December.

Facilitators Charles Weathers and Betty Parker from the Weathers Group of Columbia conducted the sessions, and Weathers is set to present the findings of these sessions in his report to council. During these meetings, residents got the chance to voice their opinions on whether the County Courthouse should be rehabilitated, replaced with a new facility, or left as-is.

YEAR ON 2

Darlington County Year in Review

In only 12 months ... We hired a new Darlington police chief.

We hired a new county superintendent of education.

We had two hurricanes. We had too many floods and too much rain.

We said no to a plan for a new Courthouse.

We lost a Darlington law-enforcement officer to an ambush attack on several officers in Florence.

That was some of what happened in 2018. Here's a recap of the rest.

-- Bobby Bryant

JANUARY
2018

'Stop acting like schoolkids on a playground'

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Darlington City Council started 2018 on a sobering note during their Jan. 3 meeting, with several citizens and local representatives chastising them for their behavior during 2017 council meetings.

Citizen Linwood Epps told council members that they need to conduct their meetings with civility and decorum, unlike what attendees have been seeing.

"It would be so nice ... if you all would stop acting like schoolkids on a playground," Epps said. "You're not up there for this; stop doing that. You

ought to let each other speak before you interrupt. The City of Darlington is in Darlington County; go to the Darlington County Council meetings and watch how they act at council meetings. They let each other speak; they don't care what you say. You can say what you want to; you have the floor. You all shouldn't be interrupting each other. Stop acting like kids. You are all grown-ups. Act like it."

Darlington County Representative Robert Williams told council members that if they are interested in doing anything other than working to make Darlington better, they are in the wrong place. "It is very crucial, critical to all of us, to unify ourselves," Williams said. "It is timeout for games. If you're into playing games, you need to go to the Olympics."

'We're just sitting here as puppets'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Darlington County Council convened their regular monthly meeting on Jan. 2, and discussed the county's relationship with the County Transportation Committee.

The talks began after Council approved the receipt of \$151,938 in CTC funds for improvements to Flatnose Road. Roughly half of this road is unpaved and becomes impassable during heavy rain, and residents visited Council and the CTC last year asking for help.

Council member Bobby Kilgo voted against receipt, maintaining his pattern of "no" votes on CTC matters as a protest against the perceived lack of autonomy granted Darlington County to prioritize

its own road repairs.

"This is another situation where local government is being controlled by the Legislature. Until they are willing to release and allow us to act as a governing body for a county - as was prescribed in the 1974-75 Local Government Act - we're just sitting here as puppets," said Kilgo.

'It is my honor to serve'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

A crowd of fresh faces greeted guests at Lamar Town Council's Jan. 8 meeting, their first since the election of a new mayor and three new council members.

Mayor Darnell McPherson joined new Town Council members Lang Howell, Inez B. Lee and Tamron McManus, all of whom won their seats in the November 2017 election as former Mayor Randy Reynolds and council members Jackie Thomas, Willie Howell and Mike Lloyd all retired from service. Lamar Town Council's lone holdover is two-year veteran Angele White-Bradley.

McPherson began the meeting by taking roll call of council members and asking them to sign in, citing a need to keep a record of attendance at these public meetings.

McManus was officially sworn in at this meeting. McPherson, Howell, and Lee were sworn in at a Jan. 6 ceremony held at the Barbara J. Hines Memorial Chapel in Lamar. "It is my honor to serve on this Council," said McPherson. "I look forward to a great experience. And to all of you in our audience, thank you so much for coming. You honor

us with your presence."

'Disasters that come in to Darlington County'

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Society Hill is one step closer to being prepared for a disaster after making plans to adopt a resolution for a hazard mitigation strategy.

Molly Odom, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Darlington County Emergency Services, spoke to council about the plan during the Jan. 9 town council meeting.

"In 2002 the Disaster Mitigation Act was passed by the federal government, which is where a lot of FEMA money comes from for recovery from a disaster and a couple of great programs such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program or the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, which are grants to



Lamar Town Council (left to right): Angele White-Bradley, Inez B. Lee, Lang Howell, Mayor Darnell McPherson, and Tamron McManus. PHOTO BY SAMANTHA LYLES



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Word of the Week

utmost - greatest or highest in degree or amount

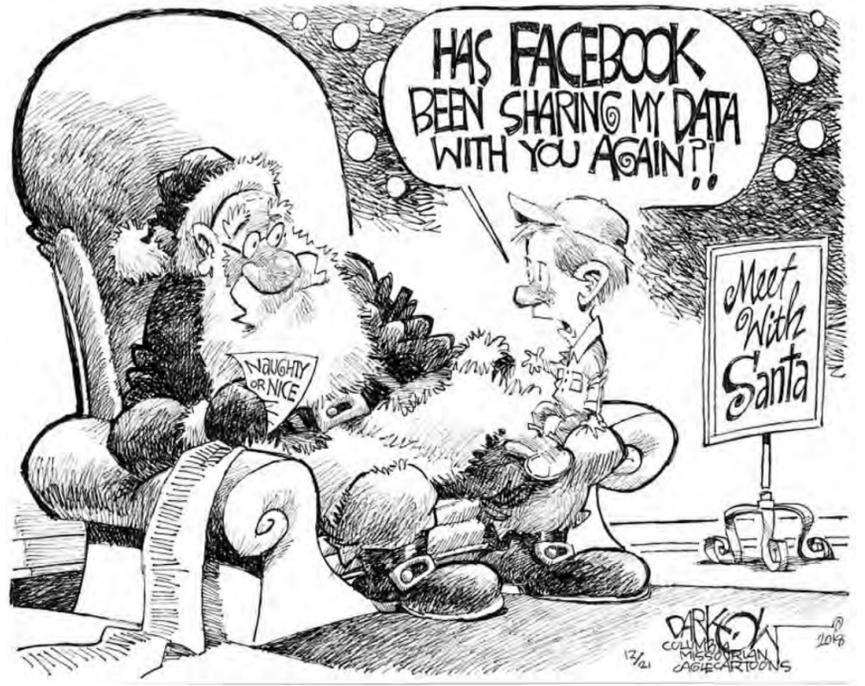
Merriam-Webster.com

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The strength of memory

By Bill Shepard

I have heard it said and have often repeated the line – “Memory is the place where time stands still, and everything remains the same!”

Blessed is the man or woman, boy or girl who can visit their place of memories and enjoy a moment of peace, tranquility and quiet solitude. I am one of those men! I am thankful! I am Blessed!

I once had a dear friend, now gone on to his eternal world, who grew up in Darlington, just a hand's throw distance from me. We knew each other well and

often spent time together. His parents were mill workers, the same as mine. Both he and I followed in our parents' footsteps and worked at the old sweatshop.

The war years came, and our paths separated. The war being over, my life headed in a new direction and I moved to the Upstate. Not long afterward, he also moved to the Upstate and our friendship was renewed. We often spent time talking about our early years, growing up in Darlington. I could tell that his early years in Darlington had not left the same impression on him, as mine had on

me.

One day, as we were talking, my friend turned to me and asked, “Bill, what is it about Darlington that has such a strong grip on you?” I thought for a moment, searching for the right answer, and then it appeared on the tip of my tongue. “Two words,” I answered. “Beautiful memories,” and that remains my answer, even to this day.

I have been sharing my memories of growing up in Darlington for many years. I have shared them in the various localities where my life's work has carried me. I have shared them in classrooms

with children where I was a teacher, and in churches, where I was a preacher. I have shared them in small groups and in large groups, and often, one on one. I never get tired of sharing them!

I owe so much to this newspaper for allowing me to share my memories on its pages. I owe so much to the late Mr. Thomas, publisher of this paper, for encouraging me to write a book, telling the story of my childhood years in Darlington. That book went to places, far beyond the city limits of Darlington.

In writing about my memories, I relive them. I become

the little boy, sitting in a classroom at St. John's in Darlington. I laugh when I see the little boy, pinching pieces from the baked sweet that his mother has wrapped in a paper bag for his lunch. He remembers his teacher, seeing him and saying, “Willie, take your potato outside and eat it. When you finish, return to the classroom.” Ah... what memories! I chuckle to myself when I recall them.

I recall the little boy, sitting by the edge of the waters of Swift Creek. The narrow stream moves slowly on its way to wherever it is going. His cork bobbles up and

down, sending a signal that a fish is nibbling at the bait at the end of his fishing line. Overhead, in the trees nearby, he spies the vines where the wild muscadines are hiding! He will visit them when they ripen in the coming fall. Lost in his thinking he forgets his cork; it is out of sight and he pulls in his line. Another small fish is added to his stringer! What memories! He is lost inside another world!

Yes, old friend, my memories of the place of my childhood have a grip on me and will not let go! I'm so glad that they do!

Year

Continued from 1

Facilitators also polled guests on the pros and cons of each option, and what their feelings were about the county's potential financing methods. County Administrator Charles Stewart said that the county has two viable options for financing a new building (potential price tag of up to \$40 million) or making repairs to the current courthouse (potential costs upwards of \$8 million).

“The two most obvious means are property taxes, or a 1-cent local option sales tax in addition to what's already in place,” said Stewart, adding that he was open to suggestions for other revenue means that could finance a capital project of this scale.

He explained that securing bonds to pay for the project would require either the levy of an additional penny sales tax county-wide, bringing our total sales tax to 9-cents on the dollar, or raising property tax millage, which would place the burden solely on property owners.

Stewart added that if council wishes to raise property tax millage or pursue an additional penny sales tax, these options would require approval by public referendum in the 2018 general election, and voters would decide the matter at the polls. Should council decide to repair the current building, Stewart said the county might opt to borrow against its debt limit (which is 8 percent of the county's assessed value), and that would give them a maximum of \$12 or \$13 million to work with.

‘We're treating it just like any other sport’

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

It's a very rare occurrence for a new game or athletic

endeavor to rise from inception to phenomenon within a few short years, but that's exactly what's happened with eSports – playing video games for prize money and/or school and club championships – and Coker College is getting into the action by establishing a new eSports program this fall.

“We're treating it just like any other sport,” says Joseph Rudy, eSports director and coach. “We're going to have everything that every other student athlete would have, meaning scholarships, jerseys, travel for tournaments. It's going to be a legit thing, just in the video game world.”

Wildly popular in South Korea, where eSports tournament audiences have filled soccer stadiums, Rudy says that eSports first took root through strategy games like the Starcraft series. Spectators follow along as individual players or teams build their armada of space vessels while trying to thwart their opponent's progress. He says that while the idea of watching other people play video games might sound dull, it can be very engaging to see their strategies unfold and witness real-time confrontations.

“It's pretty insane when you're there with a crowd and you're getting excited with them,” says Rudy, adding that occasionally, the audience is united in “mass confusion” while trying to think ahead of a player and comprehend their gameplay, but it only adds to the drama and satisfaction when that unconventional thinking plays out and begins to make sense.

FEBRUARY 2018

Historic cemetery seeks funds

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The continuing effort to clean, survey and restore the historic Marion Avenue Cemetery, final resting place

for many African-American Hartsvillians from 1904 to 1995, could get a major boost from an infusion of grant funds and recognition on the National Historic Register.

The Marion Avenue Cemetery, located behind the now-demolished Lincoln Village Apartments off 8th Street, was for decades overgrown with brush and difficult to access. Active citizens teamed with the City of Hartsville to raise funds and clear away growth and trash, and now members of the city's Historic Marion Avenue Cemetery Committee are aiming to secure the cemetery's status with two initiatives.

Mary Catherine Farrell, assistant to the city manager, told members that the City will submit a letter of intent to apply for a \$150,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African-American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. If invited to submit a full application, the City would propose to use the entire grant amount for specific cemetery projects.

These projects would include building a monument listing names of those buried at Marion Avenue and those who may be interred in unmarked graves, buying markers for perhaps 300 unmarked graves, using 2-D or 3-D ground penetrating radar to plot unmarked graves, erecting fencing, and repairing damaged tombstones.

Looking for a new police chief

From staff reports

During two sessions, the citizens of Darlington had the opportunity to get to know the four finalists for chief of police. The candidates were James Hudson of Hartsville, Kelvin C. Washington of Hemingway, Julius Riley of Cheraw and Kimberly Nelson of Hartsville.

James Hudson has 22 years of law enforcement experience. Hudson said that as a former police chief in neigh-



City of Darlington Police Chief candidate Kelvin Washington

boring Hartsville he understands that respect doesn't come with the office, it must be earned.

“When I was in Hartsville I was asked by council what some of the things were that I saw were wrong,” Hudson said. “I told them that we had a racism problem and the room was quiet. I said that there was a racism problem and it needed to be addressed. That changed everything; it was like I had gained their respect. That is something that I try to teach the young men that come into our profession: you have to earn people's respect. I will be able to earn you guys' respect if I am hired for this position. I need to earn your respect and you need to know that you can trust me.”

Kelvin C. Washington has more than 28 years of public safety leadership and administrative management experience. Washington said that after working for the federal government, he wants to get back to his roots.

YEAR ON 3

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Library to host Literary Festival

The Darlington Library will host the Black Creek Literary Festival in partnership with Burry Bookstore on Saturday, Jan. 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The festival is a showcase and celebration of writers from the Black Creek and Pee Dee region.

The event will feature over 15 area authors sharing their love of writing and local ven-

dors with books and literary items to sell.

During the festival, there will be two Q&A panels. In the first panel, "Story Basics," from 11-12, authors will discuss the basics of writing a story including plot, world building, character development, pacing, tone and other related topics.

The second panel, "All the Other Stuff," from 2-3, will fea-

ture authors discussing everything else that goes into writing a story such as publishing, promoting, writers block and other issues writers can face.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, call or visit the Darlington Library or visit our Facebook page or website at darlington-lib.org.

Year

Continued from 2

"My goal is to find an organization in the Pee Dee ... or Grand Strand area and go back to my original desire, which is policing, working with people in the community and making their community better," Washington said. Addressing what he called "elephants in the room," Washington said that Darlington is not very different from other communities.

"I came here not knowing that there are some issues here but this agency isn't the only agency with issues," Washington said. "There are a lot of communities with issues. This department isn't any different. All communities need people who care about those communities. One of the things that I found out about leadership is that in order to lead people, the first thing you have to do is you have to have a genuine love for those people you are trying to lead...You can't serve people that you don't have a genuine care for."

Julius Riley has 26 years of law enforcement experience. Riley said that if he were to be named chief, he would make sure that the police officers understand how they are to interact with the community. "Everyone knows that police officers are law enforcement but, more than that, we are peace officers," Riley said. "We are there to serve the community and to be part of the community. I have spent the last 26 years of my law enforcement career ... trying to make sure that we do just that, to treat everyone equally under the law."

Riley said that he has experience establishing community crime watch programs. "What was going on in Cheraw is we were having problems with juveniles," Riley said. "This persisted for quite a while and different neighborhood and community meetings began to take place. They expressed to the mayor, the police chief and myself that they wanted to do something about it. In talking with them, we started a community crime watch."

Kimberly Nelson has more than 18 years of law enforcement experience. "When I started out here, I went to the academy and by being the size that I am a lot of people didn't think that I'd make it through the academy but I made it," Nelson said. "I worked my way up through the ranks ... A lot of people didn't think I'd still be here but I am."

Nelson said that being a candidate from within the department, she knows what needs to be improved upon and what is working. "What I learned from one of my mentors is that hard work pays off," Nelson said. "A lot of the ones who spoke before me, they said they had to do an assessment of the police department. As I go in, if I assume the role as police chief, I will look in to things and see how things are run and done and said but I have already a foundation of what needs to be done."

'Leaving the courthouse as it is, is definitely not an option'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their Feb. 5 regular meeting, Darlington County Council heard the results of several listening sessions held last fall to garner public input on the future of the County

Courthouse. The resulting consensus, according to session facilitator Charles Weathers, was that "leaving the courthouse as it is, is definitely not an option."

Weathers and his associates from The Weathers Group of Columbia conducted five sessions at the Hartsville Library, Darlington County Courthouse, Lamar Library, Darlington Music Hall, and in Society Hill. One hundred and ten people attended these sessions, mostly in Hartsville and Darlington, and facilitators asked for their opinions about leaving the courthouse as-is, renovating the current building, or constructing a new facility. They were also asked to weigh financing options, which included levying property taxes or adding a penny sales tax to all county retail purchases to pay for the project.

Weathers' report stated that attendees felt "there was not enough information to make an informed financial decision" just yet, especially without an approximate dollar amount for the cost of the courthouse project. His report noted that many session participants were against a property tax increase, and felt that a penny sales tax "could be beneficial because guest/visitors that come for races could pay a significant amount of the costs."

Should the county choose to pursue the penny sales tax as a financing option, voters would have to approve a referendum on the November 2018 ballot. If the county fails to complete research and preparation for such a vote before that time, they would not be able to propose a penny sales tax referendum until the next general election in 2020.

A new police chief is chosen

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Last week the City of Darlington named Kelvin C. Washington of Hemingway as the next Chief of Police. According to city administration he will take office in late March or early April once his current term as U.S. Marshal for the District of South Carolina expires.

"Mr. Washington was the most qualified applicant, and he brings credibility and stability to that office. I feel he's the right person at the right time for the City of Darlington," City Manager Howard Garland said in a release from the city.

Washington has more than 28 years of public safety leadership and administrative management. "I'm very thankful to Mayor Hines, City Council and the city manager for selecting me to be the new police chief," Washington said. "I'm very humbled by the reception I have received thus far from the brave men and women of the police department and the residents of the City of Darlington. I look forward to working closely with the police officers, residents, and city leadership as we move the City of Darlington forward."

Hartsville's development plans

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their Feb. 13 regular meeting, Hartsville City Council took the first step in a development program that could lead to over \$10 million being invested in the city's downtown.

Council approved first reading of Ordinance 4325, accepting up to \$500,000 in grants from The Byerly Foundation for downtown redevelopment. This money, according to city attorney Lawrence Flynn, will help reimburse the city for purchases of property to be used in developing the Fourth Street Corridor.

The City of Hartsville will also receive a \$1.5 million loan from the Byerly Foundation to allow the new non-profit Hartsville Public Development Corporation to pursue development projects beneficial to the city. Flynn said that earlier that day, the Corporation board met and approved loan documents for this arrangement, which will allow the non-profit entity to purchase more than 30 development-targeted properties from the city and from private owners and cover related expenses, pending Byerly's approval.

Flynn said this five-year loan is interest-only, and carries a provision that would allow Byerly to forgive \$500,000 of the principal after five years, provided there is no default. The ordinance extract states that the City of Hartsville expects this development project - here called the Canalside Project - to yield perhaps \$10 million in capital investments over the long term, including commercial and residential developments.

Society Hill's 'financial situation'

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

According to Mayor Tommy Bradshaw, Society Hill is in financial trouble. Bradshaw shared the news Feb. 13 at the monthly town council meeting after councilwoman Deborah Harrell asked him to explain the meeting minutes from a called meeting Jan. 25. Harrell was absent from the meeting due to an illness.

"We looked at our budget mid-year and our collections dropped from what we expected to be getting in," Bradshaw said. "Our revenue was down and our expenses remained the same. At mid-year, we found ourselves in a cash-flow situation where we had hardly any money in the bank to cover payroll."

Bradshaw said that the town had taken on two no-interest loans from the Catfish Festival and Train Depot accounts.

"We had to call for a special meeting and it was brought to our attention that we could borrow money from the Catfish Festival for \$12,500 and \$5,000 from the Depot account to carry us through to June," Bradshaw said.

"Of course there would be no finance charge and no application charge for start up that we would have with a bank. So we had to do that for purposes of making it through. We fell on hard times with the revenue."

The Courthouse: What are the financial options?

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Darlington County Council convened a work session Feb. 19 to discuss financing options for either building a new county courthouse or repairing the current facility.

Charles Stewart, county administrator, presented council with a summary of financ-



Tim Newman, one of the final two candidates for Darlington County School District Superintendent, visited the district, spending time talking with local media, community members and district personnel.

ing options prepared by David Cheatwood, managing director, and Tyler Traudt, vice president of First Tryon Advisors of Charlotte.

These two main options under consideration are General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds, or a Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) - more commonly referred to as a penny sales tax.

According to First Tryon, there are several advantages when financing with G.O. Bonds: they offer a low interest cost, and they are the simplest and most commonly used debt structure. Disadvantages of G.O. Bonds are largely related to debt limit, since the county can only borrow up to 8 percent of its taxable assessed value unless additional bond issuance / debt capacity is approved by voter referendum. Darlington County's current G.O. Bond debt limit is about \$16.4 million, total. Financing via this method would require a countywide property tax increase.

With the Capital Project Sales Tax (which uses projected tax proceeds to finance G.O. Bonds rather than using assessed value), advantages would include low interest costs, and the security of a dedicated sales tax revenue stream to repay debt service. It would require no property tax increase, and would maintain the county's current amount of G.O. Debt capacity.

The penny tax/CPST would spread the burden of paying for the courthouse evenly across the county rather than raising millage rates and leaving the tax burden solely on property owners. The CPST would also yield revenues from visitors to the Darlington Raceway and other tourism events.

Who will lead county schools?

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Two candidates for the superintendent post in the Darlington County School District had face-time with key players in the community during sessions with local media, district staff and community members. Dr. Kevin O'Gorman and Dr. Donna Hargens toured the district and met with the various groups Feb. 21-22; the other two candidates, Dr. Chandar Anderson and Dr. Tim Newman, took a similar tour Feb. 26-27.

O'Gorman said that he became aware of Darlington County School District long before he applied to be the district's next superintendent.

"I actually started looking at Darlington County many years ago when I was a principal in a high poverty school," O'Gorman said. "I started looking at schools across the state that were performing better than they should have been."

"Of those three counties, Darlington County was one of them. Actually, a curriculum model I developed is based off of what I learned

from Darlington County."

"Safety is the number one priority," Hargens said.

"You cannot learn if you don't feel safe, so providing for not only the physical safety but the wellbeing of the students is important. There need to be safety protocols in place. Certainly we have quality teachers and quality educators who are trained to put the safety of students as the number one priority but it is the responsibility of every school and the district to put that as the number one priority."

Newman currently serves as superintendent of Orangeburg Consolidated District 4. Before getting into education, Newman worked in retail and was involved with technology systems dealing with budgets and inventory. Newman said that having a background in technology he understands the important role it plays in education.

"Once I got into education, I was involved as a technology coordinator in our school and then, eventually, in Pickens County Schools, I was the Executive Director of Technology," Newman said.

"I helped to implement technology throughout the district and I also helped design the new schools. ... Technology is a game changer for our kids. My 3-year-old granddaughter now knows how to get on the iPhone and find the apps that she wants to use that are actually educational apps. I don't think that we can ignore the fact that our kids automatically migrate to technology. It is something that they feel comfortable with. I think we need to meet them in ways that can help them be successful in their education with technology."

Anderson is currently the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel in Chesterfield County. Some things that Anderson said he would bring to DCSD include his experience working to create a good environment for teachers and students. "Working strongly with the retention and the recruitment of teachers, I've done that and I've been doing that for a while," Anderson said. "I'm really strong and really enjoy working on student achievement. I was a principal for nine years and student achievement has always been a priority for me; making sure that our students are prepared. Those things are vital to me and they are basic needs for all of our students, regardless of location."

MARCH 2018

'Water that don't mess up your clothes'

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Efforts to connect parts of Society Hill to Darlington County water may be circling the drain for another year according to a community meeting held on March 3 at R o s e n w a l d

Elementary/Middle School.

Residents of the Darlington County town say they've been trying to connect to county water for several years but according to Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority officials not enough of the town has shown an interest to make it possible.

Local pastor Matthew Robinson opened the meeting by telling the roughly 17 people in attendance that clean, potable water is a right that everyone should have.

"Every citizen should have the right to have clean water," Robinson said. "Water that don't mess up your clothes. In 2018, we shouldn't have to fight to have water."

He said that it is not only Society Hill that has water problems. "From here all the way to Bennettsville is bad water," Robinson said. "DHEC knows it. They say it's drinkable but it will mess up your clothes. We are here today, once again, to talk about means and ways to get water in a rural area."

Newman hired as county's education chief

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

After a short executive session meeting March 5, the Darlington County Board of Education voted unanimously to offer Dr. Tim Newman the position of DCSD Superintendent. Newman was one of four finalists the board brought to the district in recent weeks to meet with community and district stakeholders.

Newman was present in the meeting via conference call and accepted the board's offer. "I am honored and humbled to be offered the position of superintendent in Darlington County School District," Newman said. "I was very impressed with the process that you (the board) went through to get district and stakeholder buy-in. I accept the position and I am anxious to get started. There are so many great things we are going to accomplish together."

Board chairman Jamie Morphis said that the board saw Newman as the obvious choice after meeting with him and hearing feedback from his visit to the district. "Dr. Newman emerged as a clear leader through our research and interviews, as well as in the feedback from our teachers, principals, staff, and community members," Morphis said.

"Dr. Newman is knowledgeable about our district. He presented us with intriguing, well-conceived ideas to address the needs of our district and students. Moreover, he has the experience, attitude, and leadership abilities to cross all lines and create a cohesive culture of excellence in our district."

QUOTE

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

LuKe 2:13-14

obituaries

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229 W. Broad St., Darlington 843-393-2824
 217 W. Main St., Lamar 843-326-5890

Mary Howell Wilkes
 LAMAR – God granted peace for Mary Lee Derrick Howell Wilkes on Thursday, Dec. 20, 2018, at the age of 86. Funeral services were held Sunday, Dec. 23, in the Lamar chapel at Belk Funeral Home, with burial following at Newman Swamp Cemetery. The family received friends Sunday at the funeral home. Mary was born in Leesville, daughter of the late Ryan Robert Derrick and Pearl Eargle Derrick, but lived most of her life in Lamar. She retired from General Electric. Mary enjoyed spending time with her family and friends, and she had a gift of making those around her feel welcomed and loved. She always had an open door for anyone who wanted to visit, and always greeted

everyone with a smile. She was a member of Newman Swamp United Methodist Church, and loved spending time with her church family. Surviving are her daughter, Lois Thomas; son, Terry Howell, both of Lamar; grandchildren, Stacy (Mitchell) Burton, Scott Jeffords, and Brian (Rachel) Howell; great-grandchildren, Kelsey Jeffords, Jonathan Jeffords, McCuen Eadon, and Holdon Howell; step-daughter, Karen (Bryan) Gainey; step-granddaughter, Ashley Robin (Johnny) Ellington. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Frank Howell; her second husband, Dillon Wilkes; siblings, Louise Watt, Robert Derrick, Clyde Derrick and Linda Faye Cassidy. The family would like to give a special thanks to every-

one at Heritage Home for their care of Mary. A guestbook is available online at belkfuneralhome.com.

Burnice T. Windham
 LAMAR – Burnice T. Windham passed away Friday, Dec. 21, 2018. She was born Burnice Ervena Truett in 1927 in Lamar. She was a graduate of Lamar High School and Converse College, and worked for and retired from Southern Bell (now AT&T). Burnice was devout in her Christian faith and enjoyed traveling when able. She is preceded in death by her parents, Capers Carlisle Truett and Eula Pearl Stokes, 10 brothers and sisters and husbands Olin Therrell, F. Samuel Long and Harold E. Windham. Burnice and Sam had three

children, Frederick Long (Barbara) of Columbia; Victoria Long Orem (Jack) of Beaufort and Crystal Long Wickersham (John, dec.) of Folly Beach. When she later married Harold they had one child, Kathy Windham Priest (Dwayne) of Manassas, Va. She also had 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. The family received visitors at Belk Funeral Home in Lamar Dec. 28. A service to celebrate her life was held. Burial was at Magnolia Cemetery in Hartsville immediately following the service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. A guestbook is available online at belkfuneralhome.com.

Chur Ch News
 Please send your church news and photos to: editor@newsandpress.net

Central Baptist Church
 Pastor Andy Cook is returning to Central Baptist Church in Darlington, and he's bringing Israel with him. An experienced Israel tour leader and author of multiple books, Cook will share insight from some of the Bible's most familiar stories while he shows you the land where those stories took place. Sunday, Jan. 6, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 7, 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 8, 7 p.m. Central Baptist Church, 512 Spring St., Darlington. For more information, call 843-393-8581 or visit our website at www.cbcdarlington.com or http://www.experienceisraelnow.com. Also: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Dec. 24

Mechanicsville Baptist Church
 2364 Cashua Ferry Rd., Darlington. For more information, call 843-393-1029
 Sunday 9:30 a.m.-Sunday School; 10:30 a.m.-Worship Service 4 p.m.-Prayer Closet; 5:30 p.m. Evening Worship Services
 Monday Monday Night Ministry (MNM)-Youth Fellowship & Meal
 Wednesday 10:30 a.m. - Old Fashion Chapel Service & Fellowship Meal; 6:30 p.m. - Small Group Bible Study (All Ages) and Youth Group Meeting

The Upper Room Holy Ghost Mission
 Sunday morning worship is at 11 a.m. Bible study Thursday night is at 7 p.m. at 109 Main St. in Darlington. Call 843-250-0418 for prayer.

welcome to call the Covenant Baptist Church Prayer Line at 843-393-8555. The prayer line is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church
 3123 W. Palmetto St., Florence. Worship Time: 11 a.m. (4th Sunday 8:30 a.m.) Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. Phone: 843-601-3672
 Facebook: St. Catherine's EC Vicar: The Rev. Jeffrey R. Richardson

Lawson Grove Baptist Church
 3585 Lawson Grove Rd., Hartsville. Sunday - Church School at 9:45 a.m. and Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Wednesday. Prayer 6:30 p.m. Bible study 7 p.m.

Black Creek Baptist Church
 Black Creek Baptist Church, 139 Mont Clare Road, Dovesville, announces their hours: Sunday: 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. Worship Services and 6 p.m. Evening Worship. Wednesday: 6:30 Adult Bible Study; Youth Bible Study, Children (Children In Action) 7:30 Adult Choir Practice

Covenant Baptist Church
 Covenant Baptist Church, located at 628 Pocket Road, announces their hours:

Sunday: 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. Spoken Word Service. Wednesday: 6 p.m. Bible Study. Need a ride to church? Call 843-393-7872.

Mt. Zion Tabernacle Ministries
 Mt. Zion Tabernacle Ministries 426 W. Broad St. in Darlington announces their hours:
 1st/3rd Sunday Pastoral Sunday: Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. Church Services 11 Elder M. Frierson 2nd/4th Sunday: Sunday School at 9:30 by Deacon Z. Frierson Service at 11 a.m. Min. Gerald Green.
 Philadelphia Southern Methodist; Traditional - Conservative. 1665 Philadelphia St., Darlington. SS 10 a.m. Worship 11 a.m.

The Lord Cares
 Please continue to assist The Lord Cares in caring for those in need in the Darlington area. T.L.C.s food bank is at 201 Grove St. in Darlington. They are open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Donations of non-perishable food items (especially canned meats) are needed, as are toiletries, bathroom tissue, and paper towels. Mail monetary donations to: The Lord Cares PO Box 1457, Darlington, SC 29540.

Living on Purpose

7 things to remember about God

By Bill holland

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Christ is called Emanuel, which means "God is with us" and we are so grateful that he came to save us. Yes, we enjoy the nativity and he was once a baby, but he's not a baby today.



He was born, lived, and was willing to be crucified because he loved us more than anything in the world. Whatever you are going through today, be encouraged to know that God wants to be with you and is more than able to take care of you. He is El Shaddai, God Almighty, the All Sufficient One! Here are seven attributes of our creator that remind us why we celebrate the incarnation and sing, "O come let us adore him."

1. God knows: God is Omniscient and is fully aware when we are going through difficult times, our worries and fears and even what we are thinking. Actually, He is the only one who really knows how we feel and we can always trust that He has the perfect plan to help us. There are three answers to our prayers; yes, no, and keep waiting, so whatever the situation we can know that he is in total control and always has our best interest in mind.

2. God loves: The love and grace of God is greater than all of our sin. Jesus died a cruel and painful death in order to save us from ourselves. The good news today, is that whoever embraces this gospel about God's love and receives it into their life by faith, can obtain his mercy and be redeemed and transformed into a child of our heavenly Father. Read Romans 8:37-39.

3. God cares: He sees every tear and knows all about the problems we are going through. God wants everyone to believe that he cares about them and desires to be a part of their life. His word promises that his eye is watching every sparrow which allows us to realize how much more he is watching over us. He is sensitive and compassionate about our circumstances and longs to have a close personal relationship with us. "Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you" 1 Peter 5:7.

4. God provides: The Lord always supplies peace, comfort, joy or whatever we need, whenever we need it. Jesus can bring what no one else can give and he is always more than enough! We can

place all of our trust in God and believe with all of our heart that he will do above and beyond all that we could ask or imagine. Philippians 4:19 declares, "But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

5. God desires: What is God's desire? For us to love him and follow his voice. He also wants us to succeed, to be an overcomer and to live an abundant life. When we were born, he designed our personal blueprint and within this wonderful plan includes a possible destiny of victory and joy! He created us to be filled with his power and intended for us to walk confidently in his love and peace. Deuteronomy 31:8 says, "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

6. God heals: Jesus is the great physician and has all power and authority in heaven and Earth. He gives instruction and wisdom to doctors; He creates medicines and knows the solutions to every problem. God has the miracle power to take care of all of all our needs including physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Whether in this life or in heaven, we can know that God will eventually heal his children perfectly and completely. In Exodus 15:26 God declares, "I am the Lord that heals you."

7. God delivers: Whatever the bondage, temptation, crisis, or fear, the King of kings can lift you out of your anxiety and set your feet upon a solid rock. Believe his promises and allow his truth to set you free! Psalm 18:2-3 reminds us, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so, shall I be saved from my enemies."

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PETS OF THE WEEK



Miss Manners! Milly is a polite, well balanced lady who always has a smile and steady wagging tail to greet everyone she meets. Sporting a rich brindle jacket, Milly is a lovely leash walker who would be perfect in a family setting with kids, and other pets. Her gentle, sweet disposition is guaranteed to make you feel loved and appreciated. Stop on by today and start the new year off with Milly by your side! 57 pounds; 2-3 years old; bull mix

Wiggly, happy girl looking for a home! Meet Ava! Ava has never met a stranger and she really loves everyone she meets. A playful, kissy, interactive gal, Ava loves belly rubs, hanging out in people's lap

and being in the mix of things. A skilled leash walker, Ava would be a perfect match for a family with kids and other dogs who are looking for a super affectionate, loving four legged companion. 38 pounds; 1 year old; hound mix

The Darlington County Humane Society is located 0.5 miles from Darlington Raceway off Highway 151 in Darlington.



Have you lost or found a pet?

If you have lost or found a pet, go online to www.darlingtonhumane.org and click on the link **Lost/ Found Pets**. You will be directed to the www.thelostpets.com Web site where you can register your missing pet.

You will be able to provide a detailed description of your missing pet, as well as attach a photo. Upon registering your lost pet, an e-mail alert will be sent to the Darlington Shelter's e-mail address. This will allow the Shelter staff to recognize your lost pet should it arrive at the facility.

Area Happenings

Weekly Events

Board of Zoning Appeals

5:30 p.m. on Mondays on an as-needed basis, coordinated through the Codes Enforcement Office.

Hartsville Rotary Club

Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. at Hartsville Country Club

Darlington Elks Lodge

Tuesdays: Swing/Shag dance lessons, "New" line dance lessons from 8-10 p.m.

Wednesdays: Karaoke from 8-10 p.m.

Thursdays: Bingo at 7:30 p.m.

Darlington Elks Lodge is located at 836 Timmonsville Hwy. For more info: 843-393-1451.

BNI

Meets each Tuesday at from 7:30-9 a.m. at Black Creeks Art Council, 116 W College Ave in Hartsville.

Hartsville Kiwanis Club

Thursdays at 12:15 p.m. at the Hartsville Country Club

Hartsville Lions Club

Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. at Mr. B's Restaurant

Centennial Farmers Market

This market features fresh, organic gourmet foods, free-range eggs and homegrown, healthy foods including homemade breads and sweet treats and as always, live music and entertainment! Every Thursday from 4 - 7 p.m. Location: Corner of 5th St. and Carolina Ave. in Hartsville.

Paws to Read

Paws to Read is a literacy program where emerging and reluctant readers can create positive emotional connections with reading. Therapy Dogs International with their trainers come for one-on-one reading sessions on the first Saturday and third Tuesday of each month at 12:30 pm. and 3 p.m. respectively at the Darlington Library Branch.

Story Time

Darlington: Thursdays at 10 a.m. Info: 398-4940 ext. 305.
Hartsville: Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Info: 332-5115 ext. 7.
Society Hill: Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. Info: 378-0026
Lamar: Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. Info: 326-5524

Library Programs

Summer Reading Program, Darlington Library, Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

Family Movie - Thurs. at 4pm

Accelerated Reader Testing, Available ALL Summer

Potluck Club [What the Fork?], Monthly Event, 4th Wednesday at 5:30 pm, bring one dish and feast on many...theme changes monthly, call 843-398-4940 for more information.

Crochet & Knit Clubs

Lamar: each Monday at 4:30 p.m. 326-5524

Society Hill: each Friday from 2-4 pm 378-0026

Darlington: 2nd Friday of the month 10 a.m. - noon 398-4940

Hartsville: "The Stitches" group meets the 1st & 3rd Mondays and 2nd & 4th Thursdays at 5 pm.

Pee Dee SCORE

Pee Dee SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) offers Free confidential counseling to America's small business, serving Darlington, Florence and surrounding areas. Existing and start-up businesses can schedule an appointment by calling the Hartsville Chamber of Commerce at 843-332-6401.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous will hold an open meeting of big book and traditions studies weekly at 8 p.m. Monday nights at Trinity UMC on Pearl Street. Use Orange Street entrance. Info: 843-395-6897.

AA meets at the Hartsville AA Hut, 310 S. McFarland Street:

Sun: 6pm
Mon: noon
Tues: 8pm
Wed: noon, 6 pm

Thurs: 8pm
Fri: noon, 8pm
Sat noon, 8 pm

Al-Anon Meetings

Al-Anon is a fellowship of adult relatives and friends of alcoholics for mutual support. Visitors are welcome. Childcare is not available. Al-Anon meetings:

Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Hartsville AA Hut, 310 S. McFarland Street. Info: 843-992-2981.

Monthly Events

Hartsville Pilot Club

Fourth Monday each month at 6 p.m. at their clubhouse across from the Lawton Park Tennis Courts

Hartsville Toastmasters

2nd and 4th Monday each month at 7 p.m. at the Black Creek Arts Center

Water and Soil Conservation Board

The Darlington Soil & Water Conservation District Board will meet at 7 p.m. the fourth Monday of the month in the Clemson Extension Kitchen at 300 Russell Street, Room 207 in Darlington. Meetings are open to the public. For more information call 843-393-0483.

DDRA Board of Directors Meeting

The DDRA Board of Directors will meet at the Darlington Library, 204 N. Main Street, at 8 a.m. on the first Tuesday of the month, except in July and September.

Darlington County First Steps

2nd Tuesday each month at 5:30 pm in the Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 214 N 5th St, Hartsville.

Williamson Park Committee

The Williamson Park Committee meets at 5:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at Harmon Baldwin Recreation Center, 300 Sanders Street.

DC Disabilities and Special Needs Board

Holds monthly meetings on the last Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. The public is welcome to come to the meetings. The meetings are held at the Scott Center 201 N. Damascus Church Road in Hartsville.

Darlington Branch NAACP

The Darlington Branch NAACP meets on the second Tuesday every month, 7:00 p.m. at 109 Pearl Street. New members are always welcomed. For more information contact President Anthony Hall at 843-229-1274 or email to darlingtonnaacp@yahoo.com. Please visit our Facebook page: Darlingtonnaacp.

DHS Booster Club

The Darlington High School Athletic Booster Club has set meeting times for the next several months.

Monday, Jan. 14, 2019, at 6 p.m. in the DHS Media Center.

Monday, Feb. 18, 2019, at 6 p.m. in the DHS Media Center.

Monday, March 18, 2019, at 6 p.m. in the DHS Media Center.

Jan. 2019

Darlington County Council Meeting

The Darlington County Council will hold their monthly meeting Jan. 2 at 6 p.m. at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building, 1625 Harry Byrd Highway (Highway 151), Darlington, SC. The Council encourages citizen participation and provides an opportunity for citizens to present their concerns at the beginning of each regular meeting. Those wishing to make a presentation should contact the Clerk to Council at 843-398-4100 or jbishop@darcosc.com.

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting Jan. 8 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street.

Blood Drive at Carolina Pines

Tuesday, Jan. 8 from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center - ER Entrance, 1304 W. Bobo Newsom Highway, Hartsville, SC.

Give blood. Help save lives!

Darlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, Jan. 15 at 9 a.m. at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington County Library Board Meeting

Jan. 17 at the Darlington Library located at 204 N. Main Street, Darlington, SC.

Feb. 2019

Coker College Homecoming

Join us on Friday, Feb. 1 for an alumni drop in at Bizzell's and Saturday, February 2, there will be campus tours, class pictures, alumni reception and so much more!

Historic Landmarks Commission

5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4 at City Hall, 400 Pearl Street.

Darlington County Council Meeting

The Darlington County Council will hold their monthly meeting Feb. 4 at 6 p.m. at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building, 1625 Harry Byrd Highway (Highway 151), Darlington, SC. The Council encourages citizen participation and provides an opportunity for citizens to present their concerns at the beginning of each regular meeting. Those wishing to make a presentation should contact the Clerk to Council at 843-398-4100 or jbishop@darcosc.com.

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting Feb. 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington County Board of Education

The Darlington County School District Board of Education will meet at 6 p.m. Feb. 11 in the Training Room of the Administrative Office located at 120 E. Smith Avenue in Darlington.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Feb. 21 at 8 a.m. at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building located at 1625 Harry Byrd Highway, Darlington, SC.

Darlington Tree Board

Feb. 25 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

March 2019

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting March 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, March 19 at 9 a.m. at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

April 2019

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting April 2 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

May 2019

Historic Landmarks Commission

5:30 p.m. Monday, May 6 at City Hall, 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting May 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington Tree Board

May 13 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

May 16 at 8 a.m. at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building located at 1625 Harry Byrd Highway, Darlington, SC.

Darlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 21 at 9 a.m. at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

June 2019

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting June 4 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

July 2019

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting July 2 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, July 16 at 9 a.m. at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

August 2019

Historic Landmarks Commission

5:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 5 at City Hall, 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Darlington City Council Meeting

The Darlington City Council will hold their monthly meeting August 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Darlington Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 400 Pearl Street, Darlington, SC.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

August 15 at 8 a.m. at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building located at 1625 Harry Byrd Highway, Darlington, SC.

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Year

Continued from 3

Getting ready for a referendum

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their March 5 meeting, Darlington County Council took the first step toward preparing a “penny tax” referendum by establishing a Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) Commission. This body would draft the referendum county voters could see on their November general election ballots, proposing the levy of a one-cent sales tax to finance construction of a new county courthouse.

By unanimously approving Resolution 687 Council voted to create a commission, which will include three representatives appointed by municipalities and three representatives appointed by County Council. If the municipalities have not submitted their chosen appointees within 30 days of this resolution’s adoption, the county will choose for them. Due to dual office holding restrictions, elected officials are not eligible to serve on the CPST Commission.

Members of the commission will review proposals for capital projects within the county – such as new judicial and administrative facilities – and compose a referendum for Council to review. Should Council choose to adopt a one percent sales tax, they would be required to draft an ordi-

nance to that effect and pass three readings and a public hearing. Then the Darlington County Election Commission would place the referendum on the November, 2018 general election ballot for registered county voters to approve or reject.

City takes on stormwater

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

In a special called meeting, Darlington City Council passed first reading of Ordinance 2018-06-Master Storm Water Ordinance and a Series Ordinance for financing the Southwest Storm Water Project, though not without reservations from council members Bryant Gardner and John Milling, both of whom cast a nay vote.

Before Bond Attorney Ben Zeigler spoke to council, City Manager Howard Garland gave a recap for council and community members present. “This project started with the original grant application in October 2015, through the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Grant; the application was rejected,” Garland said. “We reapplied in March of 2016 for the same project, which is the Chalmers Street ditch. That project application was successful in June of 2016. The original amount was \$445,000.”

Garland said that through a procurement process Mike Hanna, with Hanna

Engineering in Florence, was secured as the engineer for the project. A Preliminary Engineering Report by Davis and Brown indicated that an additional 72-acre area needed to be included in the project, Garland said.

McFarland gets CPST post

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Hartsville City Council convened a special meeting March 20, and after an executive session voted to name former City Council member and Mayor Pro Tem David McFarland as the city’s representative on the Darlington County Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) Commission.

At their March 5 meeting, Darlington County Council unanimously approved Resolution 687 and moved toward preparing a new “penny tax” public referendum by establishing a CPST Commission. This body would draft the actual referendum county voters could see on their November general election ballots, proposing the levy of a one-cent sales tax to finance construction of a new county courthouse.

The CPST commission will include three representatives appointed by municipalities and three representatives appointed by County Council. If the municipalities have not submitted their chosen appointees within thirty days of this resolution’s adoption, the county will choose for

them. Due to dual office holding restrictions, elected officials are not eligible to serve on the CPST Commission.

APRIL 2018

All eyes on 3 new schools

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The Darlington County School District held public meetings last week to discuss plans for the construction of three new elementary schools in the Darlington, Hartsville, and Lamar areas.

The schools will be financed through a \$60 million general obligation bond, which is funded by the 1-percent sales tax county voters approved in the 2016 general elections. The new schools will replace aging facilities that are each more than 50 years old.

Darlington’s new school will combine Brunson-Dargan Elementary and Cain Elementary, and the new facilities will be built on the current Cain site, located on 1st Street. In Hartsville, the new school will combine Washington Street Elementary School and West Hartsville Elementary School. The new facilities will be built on Bay Road between Bobo Newsom Highway and Westwinds Drive. Lamar Elementary School and Spaulding Elementary will be combined into a new facility on the Lamar Highway, just across from Country Club Road.

At the community meeting in Lamar, citizens asked questions about plans for their new school. The man who will oversee building of all three facilities, Dale Collier, president of Brownstone Construction Group, did his best to answer their concerns.

Collier said that when selecting sites for construction, several conditions had to be met: the owner had to be willing to sell; the site had to offer adequate acreage for building, play areas, parking, and roads; the land had to be appropriate (no wetlands, soil that could support the building, no environmental contaminants); the site must have enough frontage to offer separate car and bus loop roads and a separate fire loop for emergencies; the speed limit on access roads had to be acceptable; and all adjacent roads needed to be able to support the anticipated traffic increases.

ensure that all current digital signs would come under the new ordinance. “Sometimes when ordinances have been done, the ordinance is set and you then you have certain signs that are in non-compliance,” Milling said. “(We need to look at) whether these non-compliant signs will have to be brought into compliance within five years or some sort of timeframe so that everything is coordinated rather than just have some people having to comply with the sign ordinance and others being grandfathered in forever and not having to make any compliance.”

City attorney Kevin Etheridge said that he and Lisa Rock, the city planner, had already been in discussions regarding that issue. Under the new ordinance, businesses interested in using a digital sign must follow rules regarding the size and placement as well as the brightness of the sign during non-business hours.

Digital signs for Darlington

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

During their meeting April 3, Darlington City Council gave final approval to the city’s digital sign ordinance 2018-01.

A brief public hearing was held regarding the ordinance but no one from the community signed up to speak.

Councilman John Milling asked that city staff look at what might be needed to

Sunday alcohol sales

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Darlington County Council advanced the issue of Sunday alcohol sales one step further last week, voting in favor of an ordinance that could send the matter to the ballot box this fall.

YEAR ON 7

Special corruption prosecutor won’t seek release of Harrell file

By Rick Brundrett
The Nerve

The special prosecutor assigned to investigate legislative corruption won’t seek the public release of the long-closed file on the former S.C. House speaker whose case launched the State House probe, according to an attorney representing news media in South Carolina.

The State Law Enforcement Division, which assisted special prosecutor David Pascoe, denied four open-records requests this year by The Nerve to release its investigative file on ex-Rep. Bobby Harrell, a Charleston County Republican who had served as the House speaker for more than nine years before his guilty plea in 2014 to ethics violations.

In its last denial, a SLED spokesman told The Nerve that after conferring with Pascoe, the agency determined the Harrell file was “confidential” under the state grand jury law.

Generally, investigative files in closed criminal cases are considered public records, excluding certain legally allowed exemptions, according to spokespersons at several police agencies surveyed this week by The Nerve.

After The Nerve in October reported about SLED’s denial of the state Freedom of Information Act requests, Jay Bender, the longtime attorney for the South Carolina Press Association, of which The Nerve is an associate member, said he would discuss the matter with Pascoe.

Bender informed The Nerve that Pascoe doesn’t believe that Harrell’s file can be released under the state grand jury law.

“There isn’t much he can do,” Bender said. “There is state law and, frankly, 200 years of precedent to keep grand jury matters secret except in extraordinary circumstances,” he said, adding, “I think this legislative corruption case report was an exceptional circumstance.”

Bender was referring to a state grand jury report into legislative corruption that Pascoe convinced Circuit Judge Clifton Newman – the presiding judge of the state grand jury – to release in October. In a related matter earlier this month, Pascoe filed a motion with Newman

asking that blacked-out portions of the report be made public.

As has been his practice with The Nerve, Pascoe, a Democrat who is the 1st Circuit solicitor for Orangeburg, Calhoun and Dorchester counties, did not return a call this week seeking comment on the Harrell file. He was appointed to the case in July 2014 after Republican Attorney General Alan Wilson recused himself.

The Nerve has previously pointed out that Harrell – arguably the state’s most powerful lawmaker at the time – was indicted by a Richland County grand jury, not the state grand jury; and that the state grand jury report included exhibits of testimony and other grand jury evidence not related to the Harrell case – which normally are kept secret from the public.

Under state law, if the “court orders disclosure of matters occurring before a state grand jury, the disclosure must be made in that manner, at that time, and under those conditions as the court directs.”

The state grand jury report included, though it didn’t focus on, a separate summary report by SLED of the agency’s investigation into a formal ethics complaint filed in 2013 by the South Carolina Policy Council, the parent organization of The Nerve, against Harrell with the S.C. Attorney General’s Office. The Nerve this year sought the entire investigative file on the Harrell case to learn more about how SLED investigators dealt with Harrell’s:

- Use of his private airplane. Harrell pleaded guilty to six misdemeanor counts of using campaign funds to reimburse himself for expenses related to his plane;
 - Dealings with the state Board of Pharmacy on various matters involving his pharmaceutical business;
 - Appointment of his brother, John Harrell, to the state Judicial Merit Selection Commission, which nominates judicial candidates for election in the Legislature;
 - Connection to the Palmetto Leadership Council, a legislative political action committee; and
 - Record keeping of campaign expenditures and reimbursements.
- The state FOIA allows

police files to be kept secret if their disclosure would “interfere with a prospective law enforcement proceeding.” It also allows certain redactions in released reports, such as to protect the identity of confidential informants.

In Harrell’s case, The Nerve sought SLED’s entire investigative file after he had finished his three years’ probation, though SLED said in initial responses earlier this year that it had “an active and ongoing investigation into this matter at this time.” The FOIA requests were narrowly tailored to exclude records relating to any pending investigations outside of Harrell, who resigned from office in October 2014 with his guilty plea.

“The rationale for the whole law enforcement exemption pretty much disappears completely once a case is concluded, said Adam Marshall, a lawyer with the Washington-based Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, when contacted by The Nerve. “The way to deal with anything else is through redactions and not through wholesale withholdings.”

At the Charleston and Greenville county sheriff’s offices and the Columbia Police Department, detective reports generally are considered public records – subject to redactions allowed under state or federal laws – after the cases are closed, department spokespersons told The Nerve.

“Our case file for an incident in which the defendant has been charged, adjudicated, waived all appeals, and completed his sentence would be subject to disclosure,” minus any legally allowed redactions, said Greenville County Sheriff’s Lt. Ryan Flood.

SLED – considered the state’s lead investigative agency – in the past has publicly released its closed case files under certain circumstances, such as officer-involved shootings it investigated.

Brundrett is the news editor of The Nerve (www.thenerve.org). Contact him at 803-254-4411 or rick@thenerve.org. Follow him on Twitter @RickBrundrett. Follow The Nerve on Facebook and Twitter @thenervesc.

Skeletal remains found in Darlington County

Foul play is not suspected in the discovery of human skeletal remains in the 1700 block of North Governor Williams Highway, officials

say. A resident found the remains in a garage, according to the Darlington County Sheriff’s Office.

The discovery was reported Dec. 23.

An autopsy was scheduled to be performed.

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Darlington Falcons and Lady Falcons sweep championships for home court basketball tournament

By Drake Horton
Contributing Writer

Darlington Boys

Led by tournament MVP Kenyon Scott's 26 points, the Falcons protected home court and won the Darlington Too Tough to Tame Christmas Tournament with a 64-54 win over the Spring Valley Vikings.

Down by one to start the fourth quarter, Darlington opened the quarter on a 7-0 run to retake a lead that it would never give back.

After leading for the entire first half off of good shooting in the first quarter and great transition offense in the second, the Falcons' offense went cold in the third quarter, allowing Spring Valley to get its first lead of the game.

Taking that lead into the fourth quarter head coach Anthony Heilbronn gave his team a few words of encouragement and from there the players took care of the rest.

"They came out and had a good push in the third quarter; we knew they would," Heilbronn said. "We responded

really well in the fourth quarter. I told the guys to stay with it, push and eventually we were going to wear them down. This is what we do. We are built for four quarters."

The Falcons quickly retook the lead on the 7-0 run and up 52-48, tournament MVP Scott scored 10 of Darlington's final 12 points of the game while the defense held the Vikings to just six more points total for the rest of the game.

"Kenyon was huge down the stretch, getting to the basket, shooting threes; I mean 26 points, that's something," Heilbronn said on the play of the tournament MVP.

Tournament recap

Darlington defeated Georgetown in the first game of the two-game tournament, winning 80-60. With the both wins to earn the tournament championship, the Falcons are now 11-1 on the year.

Darlington Girls

Behind an 11-0 run in the third quarter, the Darlington Lady Falcons defeated the Stall



Lady Warriors 40-32 to capture the championship on the girls' side of the Darlington Too Tough to Tame Christmas

Tournament.

"Anytime you can come out and get a win it's a blessing," Darlington head coach Brad

Knox said. "I appreciate these young ladies for coming out and playing hard. They are starting to buy into what we are trying to tell them to do. We are humble and we are going to continue to work and that is the only thing we can do."

The game between both was really a story of runs and cold shooting and Darlington was not the only team to have an 11-0 run of its own.

After jumping up to a quick 4-0 lead over Stall, the Lady Falcons went cold and the Lady Warrior got hot going on an 11-0 of their own to close out the first quarter.

Darlington ended that cold streak in the second quarter, hitting five field goals compared to the two it made in the first quarter and closing the quarter on a 6-0 run, but the biggest difference was the free throws.

Having struggled early in the season with making free throws, the Lady Falcons put in their best performance of the year going 7-11 in the first half and 8-13 in the second half.

"Before the start of this tournament, each player had to make 50 free throws apiece," Knox said. "Earlier in the season we kind of struggled with making free throws. We know we want to be good and we know if we want to advance later on down the line or have a good region we have to be able to make free throws."

The Lady Falcons' free throw making was extremely important in the fourth quarter as Darlington's offense went cold again, not making a single field goal for over 10 minutes; a span that was combined between the third and fourth quarters combined.

In fact, Darlington was so cold shooting that all but two of the Lady Falcons' points scored in the fourth quarter were from the free throw line.

Tournament recap

The Lady Falcons won the first game of the two-game tournament against the Chesterfield Lady Rams 58-26. Like the boys, the girls only have one loss on the year.



Year

Continued from 6

Council approved second reading of Ordinance 18-03, which would allow Darlington County to issue temporary permits for the sale, possession, and consumption of alcoholic liquors by the drink to authorized non-profit organizations and establishments. The ordinance would also allow for the sale of beer and wine at permitted locations for off-premises consumption, regardless of the days or hours of sale.

If Council approves third and final reading of this ordinance next month, the issue of Sunday alcohol sales will be turned over to the voters, and a public referendum will be on the general election ballot this November.

Water, sewer and annexation

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their April 10 regular meeting, Hartsville Council held public hearings and passed final reading of three ordinances. One, Ordinance 4329, will require annexation commitments before properties outside of Hartsville city limits can connect to city water and sewer services. According to the ordinance, "the Council finds that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City that those properties located outside of the City that request and contract for Utility Service ultimately be annexed into the City in order to promote the City's control of growth in its surrounding areas and in order to expand the tax base of the City."

This measure applies to those seeking a new or upgraded water or sewer connection. If the subject proper-

ty is contiguous to city limits at the time such request is made, the owner of such property will be required to submit an annexation petition to the city prior to the connection to the utility system. If the property is not contiguous at the time such request is made, the owner of the property will be required to execute a Declaration of Annexation Covenant prior to any connection to the utility system.

'Chasing those lights and sirens'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

An emergency medical responder for almost 24 years, Jacey Stone was recently honored as the South Carolina Paramedic of the Year by the EMS division of SC DHEC. Stone says she knew from the time she was a little girl that she wanted to follow in her fireman father's footsteps, to be one of the people who rushes to help when others are in need.

"He is my hero," Jacey says of her dad, retired Darlington Fire Chief Jim Stone. "As a little girl, I used to run behind the fire truck, chasing lights and sirens."

Her path took a different route in the beginning, as Stone started off her medical career as a nurse working in a hospital. "After a while I realized that being outside and chasing those lights and sirens was more where my heart was," says Jacey.

She joined up with Darlington County Emergency Medical Services as a part time EMT-Basic in 1994, achieved Paramedic certification in 1999, and became a Paramedic Supervisor in 2007.

MAY 2018

Referendum rolls on

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The Darlington County Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) Commission met April 23 and approved language for a 1-percent sales tax referendum, which could be placed on the ballot for voter approval this November.

Comprised of six members representing County Council and the municipalities of Hartsville, Darlington, Lamar, and Society Hill, the CPST Commission was charged with reviewing and approving the language of a ballot question which could levy a new penny sales tax on retail purchases throughout Darlington County. Proceeds would be used to finance construction of a new county courthouse and - possibly - new administration offices.

Currently, South Carolina's base sales tax is 6 percent, and Darlington County tacks on a 1-percent Local Option Sales Tax (which the county and municipalities use for taxpayer relief), and another one percent for the Darlington County School District (renewed by voter referendum in November of 2016).

Adding another penny would bring Darlington County's de facto sales tax to 9 cents per dollar.

Dollar General sets sights on North Main

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Last Tuesday night was a down to business, in and out, kind of night for Darlington City Council. Council gave

final approval for two ordinances relating to zoning and also gave first reading to the 2018-2019 budget.

Ordinance 2018-07 gives the property on North Main Street, next to Darlington Amusement Company, the zoning designation of General Commercial. The property is expected to house a new Dollar General, according to Greg Googer with Coastal Development Partners.

"We have the site under contract," Googer said.

"We are looking to develop the parcel as commercial. We are nearing the end of our due diligence and we do have an active lease from Dollar General. If we can have this approval we're requesting tonight they will come."

"It will bring about six to 10 full-time jobs as well as about a million-dollar investment into your community," Googer said.

"We were here earlier tonight, met with some neighbors who had some questions and I think we addressed a lot of their concerns. We talked about fencing; we talked about lighting, security systems to make sure that everything is secure."

'Lamar, we've got good news for you'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At Darlington County's quarterly dinner meeting where municipal and county officials break bread and share news of their latest projects, the Town of Lamar received some good news from Sen. Gerald Malloy regarding their ongoing efforts to reestablish their municipal water system.

Malloy gave an update on the progress of the state budget, which he said was then in conference committee, and offered some hope for additional state funds to help the

cash-strapped community. "Lamar, we've got good news for you in the budget. You're going to get some money for your water, and we're very proud that we can end up offering that," said Malloy.

Lamar has been purchasing water from the Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority for the past two years since SC DHEC shut down their water well due to traces of radium.

The town has been working steadily to get its municipal water system back on line, and has received a \$467,789 SC Department of Commerce grant (obtained with the help of Senator Malloy) to cover grant match requirements and small overages on bid contracts, and a \$500,000 Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) grant to rehab the town's two above-ground water tanks.

Crime and punishment

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Society Hill Police Chief David Young updated Town Council on an arrest he told them about last month.

"We had one burglary where someone attempted to go in a residence," Young said. "They actually went into the storage building and ransacked the inside of the storage building and he had cut himself on the glass going into the building."

"Well, he also attempted to go into the house; he didn't think anyone was home but the lady was home."

"He tried to pry the door open and he busted the window ... She yelled at him and he ran off."

"I came out for that burglary and there was some blood on the window and the back of the residence."

"That blood was swabbed and it was sent to SLED for

some DNA comparison."

Young said that after a very long wait the police department had received the results. "It's been almost a year now and we got a letter from SLED and they did get a CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) hit on that young man (who is in jail for one burglary in Society Hill). So, we will be able to charge him for that particular burglary as well."

County's budget proceeds

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Darlington County Council held their regular monthly meeting May 7 and passed second reading for the 2018/19 fiscal year budget, which will include a general fund budget of \$22.2 million for operating expenditures.

Departmental budget recommendations included \$3.7 million for the W. Glenn Campbell Correctional Center, \$755,107 for the Prison Farm, \$5.58 million for the Sheriff's Office, \$2.79 million for Environmental Services, \$2.3 million for the Fire District, \$1.4 million for the Library Fund, and \$2.3 million for the Darlington County Airport.

At an earlier budget work session, county administrator Charles Stewart informed council members that the unassigned fund balance stands around \$10.8 million. Darlington County has an internal rule that requires an unassigned fund balance (which would cover county operating expenses in the event of an emergency) matching at least thirty-five percent of the general fund, so this year's fund balance is approximately \$3 million healthier than minimum standards.

Taylor-Hancock Wedding



Keri Jacquelin Taylor and Jason Corey Hancock, both of Darlington, were married Saturday, Dec. 1, in Hartsville at Bethlehem United Methodist Church officiated by Pastor Dan Sullivan of Bethlehem United Methodist Church and Pastor Don Squires of Temple Free Will Baptist Church.

The bride is the daughter of Harry Lee Taylor and the late Mrs. Jean Byrd Taylor, of Darlington. The grandparents of the bride are the late Mr. and Mrs. William Harry Taylor, of Hartsville, and the late Mr. and Mrs. Marion Louis Byrd of Darlington.

The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Randall Dwayne Hancock. The grandparents of the groom are the late Mr. William Parker Hancock, the late Ms. Bertrude McKenzie Hancock and the late Mr. and Mrs. Paul Wayne Wilson, all of Darlington.

The maid of honor was Mrs. Kristen Taylor Nicholson. The bridesmaids were Ms. Reagan Taylor and Mrs. Candice Ostendorff Dancy. The honorary bridesmaids were Mrs. Margaret Windham Suzuki, Mrs. Jenni Fedner Turner, and Mrs.

Elizabeth Fersner Robinson. The best man was Mr. Randall Dwayne Hancock. The groomsmen were Randall Travis Hancock and Herbert Angus Nicholson.

The flower girls were Mary Claire Nicholson and Chloe Elisabeth Hancock. The ring bearers were William Harry Nicholson and Chase Wilson Hancock. The ushers were Jacob Daniel Kohut and Thomas Jefferson Jones.

Mrs. Carolyn Stokes Cribb played the piano and solos were performed by Rebecca Warren VanDerpoel and Mary Johnson Wirhousky.

The bride is a 2006 graduate of the University of South Carolina. She is employed with North Industrial Machine, LLC of Hartsville, as the director of Human Resources and is currently pursuing her master's degree in Human Resource Development from Clemson University. The groom is a 2003 graduate of Florence-Darlington Technical College and is currently employed by Nucor Steel of Darlington in the Meltshop.

The couple will honeymoon in Miami and will reside in Darlington.

Year

Continued from 7

Stewart outlined increases in employer retirement contributions, which will add another \$136,000 each year to the county's budget, adding up to an additional \$2.8 million by fiscal year 2023. He also warned that the county will have to absorb a 7-percent hike in employee health insurance costs.

'Raising the rigor for our students with disabilities'

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

Starting in August, some students with severe disabilities in the Darlington County School District will have the option to leave school with more than just a certificate of attendance. Project Search, a nationwide program, will start its first class with five students from across the county.

Lynette Jordan spoke to the board of education about the new program during their May 14 meeting, held at Mayo High School's conference center. "The grant that we applied for and were granted helps us with technical assistance, the curriculum, lots of the forms and all of the things that go along with the program," Jordan said. "It is a nine-month program for students with moderate to severe disabilities.

"It will be housed at Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center. The ultimate goal is that we are raising the rigor for our students with disabilities in the moderate and severe classes so that we can get them some competitive employment after they leave high school."

Tuition going up at F-D Technical College

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The Florence-Darlington County Commission for Technical Education met May 17 and voted to raise tuition at Florence-Darlington Technical College. Each credit hour at Tech currently costs \$171; effective this fall, that rate will increase to \$179 per credit hour.

Douglas Lange, FDTC Vice President of Business Affairs, told commissioners that the Higher Education Price Index has increased by 3.7 percent this year. In order to keep pace with the index, Lange presented the commission with a few different options to consider. Lange said that a hike of 3.5 percent would mean a \$6 increase per credit

hour; a 4.1 percent hike raises rates by \$7 per credit hour, and a 4.7 percent rise would increase rates by \$8 per credit hour. He noted that Tech's tuition increase last year was about 1 percent below the increases levied within their college cohort.

Making that 4.1 percent increase effective this fall would generate about \$824,000 in additional revenue this school year. Delaying the tuition hike until spring would require an even steeper and more sudden increase of \$9 or \$10 per credit hour.

Lange said this increase "is about paying the higher salaries that we are already paying. This is about paying additional pension costs, and making sure that we have adequate supplies to do the instruction in classrooms. ... This is reflective of our costs."

'The before, during and after of a mass casualty incident'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Members of the first responder community – including emergency medical, fire, and law enforcement – attended a training session on May 19 and learned valuable techniques to sharpen their performance in the event of a mass casualty event.

This day of instruction was presented by Darlington Rescue Squad and Poseidon Air, Land, and Sea training company and hosted by Bethea Baptist Home.

"We're here to learn about the before, during and after of a mass casualty incident, with a focus today on school shootings," said Anna Dewitt, treasurer for Darlington Rescue Squad.

"We'll talk about how to prepare, what to do during an incident – like using tourniquets and performing basic first aid – and the aftermath, like what happens when the media leaves and a town is left to deal with a tragedy."

Speaker Daniel McManus of Poseidon Air, Land, Sea gave tips for improving your chances of surviving a mass casualty event – such as an attack by an active shooter – by pre-planning and being vigilant. McManus suggested having open discussions among your family or co-workers about what to do in the event of an incident. Practicing situational awareness, learning where the exits are, agreeing on rally points, and packing a go-bag with emergency medical supplies (especially a tourniquet) could increase your chances of surviving a dangerous incident.

'This was a dose of reality'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Regular citizens got the chance to virtually step into the shoes of a law enforcement officer last week as the Darlington Police Department invited members of the public to try out a firearms training simulation.

"Through a partnership with the South Carolina Municipal Association, we've been able to conduct FATS (Firearms Training Simulator) training," said Kelvin Washington, Chief of Police for the City of Darlington.

"The simulator is interactive, and it shows scenarios that police officers all over the country encounter pretty much every day. We are training and testing officers based on their response to these kinds of situations... sometimes the folks in the simulated scenario will listen to the officers, and sometimes they will not."

DPD Sgt. Sharon Blakney experienced this situation when the simulator dispatched her to a domestic dispute in a public parking lot. While Blakney focused on the male suspect, who behaved aggressively toward both his wife and police, the female suspect took her baby from its car seat and held it to her chest. In a shocking plot twist, she then produced a gun from the baby's blanket and opened fire, killing both her husband and Blakney's simulation avatar.

"It was very realistic. It took my breath away," said Blakney, who serves as the police department's evidence custodian. "I'm not on patrol, and working in evidence I'm kind of sheltered. This was a dose of reality."

JUNE 2018

A pay raise for County Council

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Darlington County Council held their regular monthly meeting June 4 in the fifth floor courtroom of the county courthouse. During this meeting, Council voted to give themselves a pay raise, finalized budgets for the next fiscal year, and heard concerns regarding their recent redistribution of Accommodations Tax monies.

Council passed second reading of Ordinance 18-06, which increases compensation for members of Darlington County Council. The original ordinance would have altered the pay scale as follows: Members currently earn-

ing \$7,000 per year would be bumped up to \$7,247; the vice chair currently earning \$7,500 per year would be bumped up to \$7,764; the chair currently earning \$8,200 per year would be bumped up to \$8,489.

Council member Bobby Kilgo, citing that Darlington County Council has not voted itself a pay raise since 1991, moved to amend the ordinance to increase those rates, and Council approved his amendment. The new compensation rates would pay the chair \$14,000 per year, and the vice chair and regular members \$13,000 per year. Only Council member David Coker voted against the pay raise and the amendment.

Council approved final reading for the 2018/19 fiscal year budget, which includes a general fund budget of \$22.2 million for operating expenditures. Departmental budgets include \$3.7 million for the W. Glenn Campbell Correctional Center, \$755,107 for the Prison Farm, \$5.58 million for the Sheriff's Office, \$2.79 million for Environmental Services, \$2.3 million for the Fire District, \$1.4 million for the Library Fund, and \$2.3 million for the Darlington County Airport.

Property taxes will be increased by 1.47 mills, per the SC state law millage cap of 2.13 percent.

Hartsville approves new budget

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

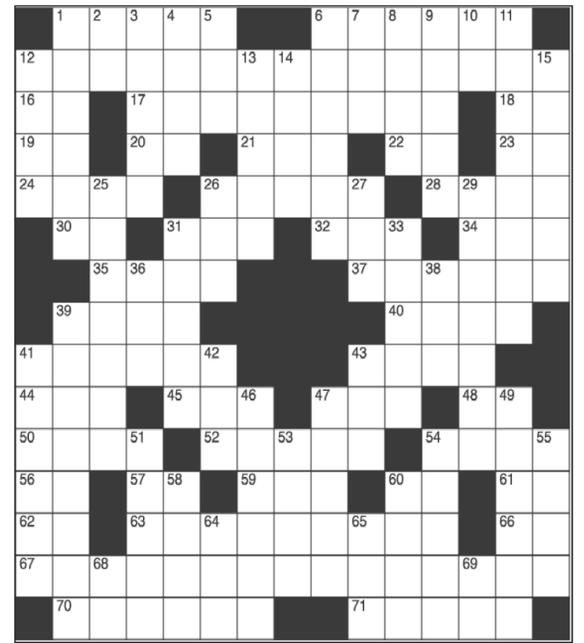
Hartsville City Council held its regular monthly meeting on June 12 and formally adopted all 2018/19 fiscal year budgets, totaling nearly \$20 million.

These budgets include a General Fund of \$10,029,796, a Water, Sewer, and Waterpark Enterprise Fund budget of \$6,443,857, an Infrastructure Fund budget of \$520,500, a Solid Waste Fund budget of \$1,344,800, a Hospitality Fee Fund budget of \$995,100, an Accommodations Tax Fund budget of \$185,000, a Debt Service Fund budget of \$165,000, a Storm Water Fund budget of \$106,327, and a Recreations Concessions Fund budget of \$105,000.

The new budgets include no tax increases, and will go into effect on July 1, 2018.

Also on the agenda, Council held a public hearing and passed final reading of Ordinance 4335, which will implement a new and more flexible purchasing policy. Under these policies, department heads will have discretion to make small purchases up to \$9,999 without using competitive bidding. Purchases ranging from \$10,000 to \$24,499 will

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ACROSS

1. Class
6. Husband or wife
12. All the same
16. Exclamation of surprise
17. Lived in
18. Hawaiian entertainer
19. Of I
20. Belonging to me
21. One thousandth of an inch
22. Midway between south and east
23. Article
24. Pitchers have them
26. Steps
28. Mars crater
30. ___ route: on the way
31. Diego, Francisco, Anselmo
32. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
34. These three follow A
35. Frail
37. Platforms
39. Level
40. Computers
41. Where spiders live
43. An enemy to Batman
44. Mineral
45. Body part

47. Give
48. Atomic #21 (abbr.)
50. European tax
52. Bleated
54. Capital of Norway
56. Pa's partner
57. Stephen King's clown tale
59. Atomic #50
60. Military policeman
61. One quintillion bytes
62. Where impulses manifest
63. Offers as a candidate
66. Spielberg film
67. Great job!
70. Live in
71. Cares for

13. Book of Esther antagonist
14. Invests in little enterprises
15. Organs that produce gametes
25. Mediterranean city
26. Peter's last name
27. Unhappy
29. Swollen area within tissue
31. "No ___!"
33. Soap
36. Chop or cut
38. "Atonement" author McEwan
39. Bullfighter
41. Of the universe
42. Founder of Babism
43. Not good
46. Large, flightless bird
47. Punitive
49. Makes less messy
51. Belts out a tune
53. Aboriginal people of Japan
54. An eye protein
55. Broad sashes
58. Actress Spelling
60. Distribute
64. Unpleased
65. Body art
68. Midway between north and east
69. Overdose

DOWN

1. Form a whole
2. Indicates position
3. Moves in water
4. Diminutive
5. Old English letter
6. "Save the Last Dance" actress
7. Dab
8. Digits
9. Female cattle's mammary gland
10. Yes
11. Improves
12. We all have one

WORD SEARCH

D U C H H U D K I N D L I N G P E D U E
 A H A B E T A T S O M R E H T U F G C P
 K E N L A P G A S S I X T I L A E N B L
 U X R O R I G I P T O I R F C C A E F P
 V H K W T P O G S B O E V A I I U L P N
 P A X E H E R R E H L E D R L T M V O Y
 T U Y R T T T R F B N E C P P I L O T V
 I S E M N R I H I T R U P V F H M B L X
 U T L K E F O T K E L A B B I T I Y E S
 E S T S N U S N E A C C D M R D F A U O
 F R N A G U Y K T R O U O G E C K T F U
 F I A T B M D I C N U O E X P B U N K R
 I E M M V L O B V I R T L W L T F A H C
 C L O I H N O E C G R C A G A U W I E
 I C D P P E C H N O T B Y R C H G D C V
 E E X P T T I E N O T S E E M T A O G
 N I N I I M V R E T A E H B R P U R H Y
 C A N V N I Y V E L O C I T Y V M P X R
 Y G E E L F A M K E S A H C Y B K E A S
 I B Y E N E R G Y O Y U D O O W H P T I

- APPLIANCE
- BLOWER
- BRICK
- BTU
- CHASE
- CHIMNEY
- CIRCULATION
- COMBUSTIBLE
- CONVECTIVE
- EFFICIENCY
- ENERGY
- EXHAUST

- FACADE
- FIREBOX
- FIREPLACE
- FLUE
- FUEL
- GAS
- HEARTH
- HEATER
- IGNITE
- INSERT
- KINDLING
- LIVING ROOM

- MANTLE
- PILOT
- PIPE
- RADIANT
- SOURCE
- STONE
- TEMPERATURE
- THERMOSTAT
- VELOCITY
- VENT
- WOOD

Answers on 11

require written quotations and competitive pricing.

School board passes new budget

By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

The Darlington County Board of Education gave the final reading of the 2018-2019 budget during their June 11 meeting, passing it with little fanfare. The board has held several workshops over the last few months to go over the specifics of the budget with Chief

Financial Officer Renee Douglas.

The approved budget is \$89.5 million for this coming year. The approval was unanimous with two board members, Jamie Morphis and Wanda Hassler, not present for the vote.

Though the budget was approved, Douglas said that there is still a chance that changes will need to be made based on the fact that the South Carolina General Assembly has not passed their own budget yet.

Year

Continued from 8

"We have used the Senate version of the budget, right now," Douglas said. "Until we know anything else that is really our best guess."

DCSD Superintendent Tim Newman, attending his first meeting in his official capacity, said that many districts are relying on the Senate version of the budget to craft their own budgets because it years past it has tended to be closest to the final budget that gets approved by state lawmakers in the General Assembly.

This coming school year, \$275,000 will be used from the district's general fund balance to implement block scheduling at the district's three high schools.

EdVenture: 'You can't miss it'By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The new EdVenture Children's Museum Hartsville satellite is putting the last few finishing touches in place before their doors open to the public the weekend of June 30.

Located on West Carolina Avenue in downtown Hartsville, the new facility is sure to capture imaginations inside and catch your attention outside.

"You can't miss it - it's a teal and purple building, so you'll be able to see it from a distance," says Karen Coltrane, president and CEO of EdVenture.

The EdVenture Children's Museum in Columbia is famed for promoting an immersive and entertaining approach to learning, offering multiple exhibits, games, and attractions that teach kids about science, reading, and numbers as they play. The Hartsville satellite will continue this tradition, and will include some unique features with local flavor.

JULY 2018

Referendum on its way to ballotsBy Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At their regular monthly meeting July 2, Darlington County Council granted final approval for the Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) referendum to be placed on voter ballots this fall.

By a vote of 6 to 1, Council approved final reading of Ordinance 18-07, finalizing language for the 1-percent sales tax referendum, which will appear on ballots at the

November 6 general election. If approved by a majority of county voters, this new penny sales tax will apply to all retail purchases throughout Darlington County for a period of four years.

The tax is expected to yield approximately \$5 million each year, and the resulting \$20 million in revenue would be used to finance construction of a new county courthouse and - possibly - new administration offices.

The estimated cost of building a new judicial center is \$10.75 million, and a new administration building could cost \$4.83 million.

The cost of tearing down the current courthouse and administration building (constructed in 1965) is estimated at \$3.36 million, not including permits and landfill fees.

The total cost for all three projects is estimated at \$18.94 million.

'Put us on good financial footing'By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

With the start of a new fall semester fast approaching, Florence-Darlington Technical College Interim President Ed Bethea is optimistic that the new school year will be a good one.

After taking over the president's role in March, Bethea has put plan into action to get the school on a firm foundation.

"I don't know what the time frame will be for hiring a new president so I am basically implementing a strategic planning process that we are going to start fairly soon," Bethea said.

"It is going to include a lot about the things that we need to do here to put us on good financial footing."

Bethea said that a large part of that includes finding a way to accurately predict and track enrollment.

"I want to, overtime, have a good robust enrollment plan that helps us predict what our enrollment is going to be really well so that we can know and plan better," Bethea said.

"As a result of that, we can right size the institution."

"I'm not planning on letting people go or anything like that."

"As people decide to leave the institution, we may not fill those positions and things like that."

"I feel like we may be slightly overstaffed and we need to get back down to what is appropriate for the enrollment we have."

"I'm just trying to make sure that we have a solid plan for enrollment, knowing where that level will be."

AUGUST 2018

A relic of races pastBy Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

A relic of Darlington's racing past will soon be on display at the Darlington County Historical Commission, thanks to a donation by a local citizen.

Hartsville native Tommy Jordan has raced cars and motorcycles from coast to coast, but his love for motor-sports actually started in a contest with no motors at all. As a boy, he entered and won the inaugural Darlington Soapbox Derby in 1951 (an event co-sponsored by the News and Press) and he recently decided to donate his winning car and race kit to the Historical Commission.

"I'm close to 79 years old and I don't have any children to give it to, and it wasn't doing anybody any good just sitting where it was, so I thought I'd like to see somebody get some good out of it," says Jordan, who fondly remembers the soapbox derby as his first foray onto a racecourse.

"I was 11 years old at the time, and Chevrolet was a big sponsor of soapbox derby racing nationwide."

"They supplied wheels to the boys who had sponsorships for races, and I went home and told my mom and dad that I'd like to do it. My dad told me no, and said that I never finished anything I started, so I felt kind of left out," says Jordan.

Luck was on his side, though, as his father spoke with local Shell service station owner John Stevenson just a few days later, and Stevenson offered to sponsor Tommy in the soapbox derby. His dad picked up a set of wheels from the local Chevy dealer and brought them home, and the Jordans were soon quite literally off to the races.

"Oh boy, I was so happy," he recalls with a laugh.

More trees for DarlingtonBy Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At two public meetings held last week, Darlington citizens got the chance to offer input on the city's plan to plant 73 new trees on a major thoroughfare.

"This is a public comment period to get some feedback from the community on the South Main Street Tree Project," said City of Darlington planning director Lisa Chalian-Rock.

The City of Darlington Tree Board created the plan with consultation and recommendations from arborist Debbie Dickinson.

Factors like root spread requirements and drainage were taken into consideration when selecting and placing tree positions, and the Tree Board also expressed a preference for flowering trees, which will present well along this main entrance to the city.

Potential tree types range from colorful Yoshino Cherry and crape myrtle to sturdy oaks and magnolias.

The variety and staggered plantings will also offer protection in case one species is infected with blight, slowing or stopping it from spreading to others further down the street.

"The Tree Board also wanted to consider future canopy, but providing canopy over five lanes of traffic with power lines already there is pretty difficult. We can't promise too much canopy, but it would be really nice to see," said Chalian-Rock.

The trees will be planted along the west side of South Main Street beginning near the Food Lion supermarket and extending about .08 miles north to Allen Street.

'This piece of property needed to come down'By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The Tyner Warehouse, located at Russell Street and Broad Street in Darlington, has surely seen better days, and city officials are in the midst of efforts to compel its owners to either make repairs or arrange for demolition.

Estimated at around 100 years old, the former tobacco warehouse is between 25,000 and 30,000 square feet large.

It has been divided and repurposed to house several different businesses over the years, ranging from flower shops and beauty salons to taxi cab stands and television stores. From time to time, businesses such as H&S Furnishings have rented portions of the Tyner Warehouse for extra storage.

But despite its continued usage as a rental property, the building's condition steadily declined to the point where exterior walls rotted and collapsed and the city had to condemn it as unsafe for occupancy.

"There's been structural issues there for years," said Alex Gaaney, City of Darlington Building Inspector. A previous city building inspector, Mike Cavanaugh, made efforts to discuss solutions and courses of action with the building's owners, siblings Jamie Tyner and Lynn Gehrke.

"I think that the building was condemned four to five years ago, and it's been an ongoing battle since then," said Gaaney, recounting that citations were written to the

owners and they were issued orders by the city's former municipal judge Dan Causey.

"Some orders were issued, but they really weren't followed up on and it sort of fell through the cracks. I came here in September of 2016, and it came to my attention that this piece of property needed to come down," says Gaaney.

SEPTEMBER 2018

Two races for WilliamsBy Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

S.C. House Representative Robert Williams (Democrat, District 62) has a lot on his plate these days; he's running for re-election to the General Assembly, and also mounting a challenge to incumbent Republican Congressman Tom Rice for the District 7 US House seat.

But Williams says the hard work involved in running two races is worth the effort, as he believes he can ably represent the 7th and bring his dedication and compassion for the less fortunate to bear in Congress.

Williams served in Iraq with the South Carolina Army National Guard, and says his experiences in that war-torn country shaped his perspective and turned his eye toward public service.

"After I got over there and saw the devastation of war, saw the ways it ripped apart people's lives and their communities... it was very moving seeing people trying to live in such tragic conditions."

"After I got back home and traveled around through some of our communities, I saw a lot of the same conditions. People living with no running water, no electricity - living in poverty. That really drove my interest in getting involved and trying to change things," says Williams.

'What is our plan' for schools?By Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

With a new superintendent on board, Darlington County School District is looking to the future.

Ground was broken for the new Darlington-area school that will combine the populations of Cain and Brunson-Dargan Elementary Schools.

New principals are in place at several schools.

Now, Dr. Tim Newman wants to know what's next for the district.

During a recent board work session, Newman talked with board members about updat-

ing a facilities study done in 2012.

"I spent some time cleaning out my office and I came across the Darlington County School Facilities Study done back in 2012; I believe that was Dr. Knight's last year," Newman said.

"I had a chance to start reading through it and it was put together by one of our current architects. I have to tell you, a lot of what is in here made sense, the suggestions and the different possibilities and different scenarios that they were setting up."

Newman said that the facilities study talked about a topic he and the board had been discussing: having a plan for the future.

"If you all recall, for the last few months I've been saying that we need a plan for the next 10 years," Newman said. "We're building three schools now but we have 50- and 60-year-old schools in the district that are going to have to be dealt with. What is our plan? If we don't have a plan, we're going to be in trouble."

Society Hill embraces solar farmsBy Melissa Rollins
Staff Writer

During the Sept. 11 Society Hill Town Council meeting, council members voted to approve a resolution for solar farms.

Mayor Tommy Bradshaw told everyone present that he was authorizing councilwoman Deborah Harrell to use her role as Mayor Pro Tem in this particular situation and he would be recusing himself.

"Under new business, we are talking about the solar farms coming on the outskirts of Society Hill and part in Society Hill," Bradshaw said. "The property that is on the outside of Society Hill belongs to me and I have leased it to them."

"The property on the agenda tonight does not belong to me, and does not directly affect me, but to make sure that there is no appearance of impropriety on my part, I am now recusing myself as mayor. I will step down from the chair and Deborah Harrell our Mayor Pro Tem will now take the chair and go forward."

Once she was in control of the meeting, Harrell made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the solar farm issue. Darlington County Administrator Charles Stewart and Darlington County Economic Development Director Frank Willis were involved in the executive session along with Harrell and councilwomen Carolyn Oliver, Michelle Steen and Tammy Gandy.

YEAR ON 10

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Year

Continued from 9

Once the council returned to a regular open session, they voted unanimously to approve the resolution 'Authorizing the inclusion of certain property within the Town of Society Hill in a multi-county Industrial Park.'

Hello, Hurricane Florence

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

When forecasts indicated that Hurricane Florence would make landfall in the Carolinas, the City of Darlington began preparing to fight an old foe: storm water.

"We put a primary focus on cleaning out storm drains. We had our new vactor truck go out and work areas of concern," says Darlington city manager Howard Garland, adding that these efforts focused on streets that usually experience flooding during heavy rain.

These areas included South Main Street near the intersection with East Broad Street, Russell Street, Hampton Street, C and D Avenues.

Garland says that as storm models and local waterway flood warnings continued to change, city workers had to stay on their toes and address problems as they occurred, clearing water where possible and closing streets when necessary. The most severe flooding occurred around the Black Creek area and the Oakdale community, with homes on Shoshone Drive and Hank Haney Lane suffering multiple incursions of floodwater.

"The biggest concern for us was not knowing how much water to expect," says Garland, noting that city employees did great work all around. "The folks on the vactor truck (led by Jamesy Morrison and Moses Jackson) did an excellent job. They received guidance and support from Streets and Sanitation superintendent Karen Carroll and Water and Sewer superintendent Freddie Kinsaul. Kendrick Holloman took our sweeper truck out and used it to clear storm water on some streets... and Franklin Dowdy and his crew worked with Duke Energy to get the lights back on in areas where we lost power, and Frankie worked on the lift stations and pump stations to get power restored there and keep them working."

The Darlington Police Department went to 12-hour shifts starting on Thursday before the storm. A curfew went into effect Thursday (Sept. 13) through Sunday (Sept. 16), warning people to stay off the street between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. The DPD also checked on senior citizens and people with disabilities during the storm to ensure they were well and had everything they needed, such as medications, food, and water.

Garland says that while city employees performed admirably during the storm and its aftermath, Hurricane Florence brought to light a new potential danger that must be addressed with planning and preparation – namely, the dam at Prestwood Lake (beside Sonoco) coming very close to overtopping and releasing more water into an already overflowing Black Creek.

OCTOBER 2018

'The bravest police officer'

By Bobby Bryant
Editor

His name was Sgt. Terrence Carraway, he was a 30-year veteran Florence police officer who lived in Darlington, and he is being mourned around the state and nation as the officer who didn't survive a shooting rampage that wounded six of his colleagues last week.

Carraway, 52, was killed Oct. 3 when a man at the Vintage Place subdivision in Florence County opened fire on sheriff's officers who had come to serve a warrant. When other officers came to help, they were also caught in the gunfire.

"Fire was being shot all over," Florence County Sheriff Kenney Boone said. "The way the suspect was positioned, his (field) of fire was several hundred yards. He had an advantage. Officers couldn't get to the ones that were down."

Seven officers, including the Florence Police Department's Carraway, were shot. Three Florence city officers and three Florence County deputies were wounded. Carraway was the only immediate fatality. A 74-year-old disabled Vietnam veteran, Frederick Hopkins, was being held in the shootings; his Facebook page describes him as a competitive shooter since 1984.

Florence Police Chief Allen Heidler called Carraway "the bravest police officer I have ever known." He added: "Today will mark a very horrific day for the Florence Police Department. Today we lost a good friend of mine, an officer I've known for 30 years."

Condolences quickly poured in from around the nation and state. "My thoughts and prayers are with the Florence County Sheriff's Office and the Florence Police Department tonight," President Donald Trump said via Twitter. S.C. Gov. Henry McMaster said: "This is simply devastating news from Florence." U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham said he was "heartbroken" over the "horrific incident."

Darlington vs. the mosquitoes

By Bobby Bryant
Editor

If they see skin, they go for it.

Hurricane Florence's rains have turned much of the Carolinas into a breeding factory for mosquitoes – bigger, badder and more bloodthirsty than any in recent memory.

Darlington County officials have gotten nearly 1,300 complaint calls about the flying pests, citizens were told at an Oct. 1 County Council meeting. For city officials, it's been much the same story, says the city's planning director, Lisa Chalian-Rock.

"Lots of people have been really upset," such as moms who've been watching while mosquitoes dive-bombed their kids waiting at bus stops, Rock said. "We got plenty of people calling. . . . 'Why didn't you come by my house?'"

The city has been stepping up its efforts to spray the mosquitoes into submission, at least until cooler fall weather helps solve the problem. A spray truck has been following the same route that city

garbage trucks take; the truck has been working its way through neighborhoods Monday through Thursday, 8-11 p.m., weather permitting.

Farewell to 'Coach Dave'

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

David S. "Coach" Neilson passed away last Thursday night and was laid to rest Oct. 7 after a funeral service at Darlington's Central Baptist Church.

Born in Chicago to Mr. and Mrs. Howard Neilson, "Coach Dave" spent most of his life in South Carolina. While attending Aiken High School, he achieved success as a basketball player and earned a scholarship to the University of South Carolina.

Though he majored in business and served in the Army, Neilson's love for basketball eventually led him to become a coach and educator.

While teaching history and marketing at St. John's High School, Neilson coached the 1983 Blue Devils basketball team to an undefeated 27-0 season and the 3-A Boys' State Championship. The memory of that title game – a 56-55 last-second victory over James F. Byrnes – still resonates sweetly among hometown fans.

"Terrance Sanders tipped in the winning shot with one second left on the clock and everybody just went crazy. It was magical," said Howard Garland, a former Neilson player who called the game on radio station WJAR.

"On the way home from Columbia, the bus stopped at a Wendy's and Dave insisted the restaurant give every player a free apple pie because they were champions."

An armored rescue vehicle for Hartsville?

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

At its Oct. 9 regular meeting, Hartsville City Council discussed the possibility of procuring an armored emergency rescue vehicle for the police department.

The topic arose as council members offered condolences for the death of Florence police officer Terrence Carraway and recovery wishes for the six City of Florence police officers and Florence County deputies wounded Oct. 3 by the same gunman accused of killing Carraway.

Council member Billy Shirley suggested that Hartsville needed an armored rescue vehicle of the type Florence police used to evacuate their wounded officers from the gunman's field of fire. Mayor Mel Pennington and Hartsville Police Chief Jerry Thompson agreed. "We need one, and if we never have to use it, I would be the happiest man on Earth," said Thompson.

Hello, Hurricane Michael

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Hurricane Michael hit Darlington County with heavy rain and high winds last Thursday, causing several trees to fall and flooding at least 12 streets in the city of Darlington.

Emergency responders from the Darlington Fire and Police departments worked with Duke Energy to clear away trees and restore power to homes and businesses. County schools and most government offices closed on Thursday, but reopened Friday as waters receded and skies cleared.

A forum on the courthouse's fate

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

Citizens gathered Oct. 15 at the new Voter Registration Annex to discuss the upcoming penny sales tax referendum that would fund construction of a new Darlington County Courthouse.

Darlington County Council members Robert L. "Bobby" Kilgo and Joyce Wingate Thomas and Clerk of Court Scott Suggs hosted this informal question and answer session.

Kilgo answered most of the audience questions, which focused on several key concerns. The meeting lasted just over one hour.

The current Darlington County Courthouse was completed in 1964 and opened in 1965. It houses operations for circuit court, probate court and family court.

It also houses all the county's administrative offices, such as the treasurer, auditor and planning department.

Suggs, who has served as clerk of court for 22 years, says the building's biggest deficit is inadequate security.

He cited incidents where defendants encountered witnesses and judges in hallways, and criminal defendants rode in the same elevator as citizens going up to pay their vehicle taxes. Suggs noted that at least twice, prisoners have escaped and led police on chases through the courthouse and around the Public Square.

NOVEMBER 2018

Hartsville PD on way to getting armored vehicle

By Samantha Lyles
Staff Writer

The Hartsville Police Department is moving ahead with plans to acquire an armored rescue vehicle. Despite lengthy debate during a special meeting, City Council voted 6-1 to authorize Chief Jerry Thompson and his command staff to begin the acquisition process.

With approval of Resolution 10-18-02, HPD will apply to receive an armored rescue vehicle through the United States 1033 Program, which transfers excess military equipment to civilian law enforcement agencies.

The resolution requested council's approval for receipt of a Caiman MRAP 6x6 Armored Personnel Carrier/Rescue Vehicle.

The vehicle itself would be free, and the city would pay for shipping, annual liability insurance, maintenance (performed by the National Guard), and fuel costs.

Council members Tre Gammage, Teresa Mack and Mayor Pro Tem Johnny Andrews expressed reservations.

Gammage requested that the matter be tabled for two weeks while council studied it further and received more

information about available vehicles. His motion initially passed, but council members William Shirley and Bernice Wilson balked at the idea of a delay.

"The police department has already vetted this for us. They know what they need, or what they think they need. The iron is hot, let's strike," said Shirley, noting that he hoped the vehicle would never be deployed in an active shooter situation.

Issues, issues and more issues

By Bobby Bryant
Editor

Quality of life, stable home environments, too few kids going to college, leadership issues at Florence-Darlington Technical College and even Darlington High School's struggling football team were among the topics that peppered a meeting of city, county and school district officials.

Much of the session, hosted by Darlington County schools superintendent Tim Newman, dealt with education problems and solutions. "Most of our kids are really good kids; they just need direction," Newman said.

He said 70 percent of Darlington County high school graduates don't go to college. After graduation day, he said, many don't have a plan for what comes next. One way to fix that, he said, is through an internship program that the school district is developing with area businesses. "I want to put our kids to work, and I want to put them to work in Darlington County," Newman said.

When the forum was opened up to other issues, officials in the audience saw problems far and wide that needed to be addressed: sewage leaks, "no leadership" at FDTA, lack of action on redeveloping the amphitheatre at St. John's Elementary School, and even frustrations over Darlington High School's hard-luck football team, the Falcons.

No new courthouse, the voters say

By Bobby Bryant
and Samantha Lyles

About 8:45 p.m., the tide turned against a new courthouse for Darlington County.

As the ballots were being tallied Nov. 6 in county election offices in Darlington, the initial returns showed that voters appeared to be backing a plan to hike the county sales tax by 1 percent to raise \$20 million for a new courthouse and administration building.

But they weren't wild about it. "Yes" votes on the tax question had a tepid lead, maybe 5 percentage points.

By 8:30 p.m., with about half the county's precincts in, the "yes" margin had fizzled to 3 points.

A few minutes later, 1 point.

About 8:45, the "no" ballots took the lead by 3 points.

And that was pretty much it for the courthouse tax. Onlookers whipped out their cellphones, made quiet calls: Looks like the tax is failing. By 9, the "no's" were leading 52-47 percent.

People began leaving, like football fans when it's clear who the loser is going to be. The final tally held at 52-47

"no": 10,618 residents backed the tax increase; 11,747 opposed it.

The issue isn't over, officials say. The "foul" physical condition of the building and security problems at the courthouse, which was completed in 1964 and opened in 1965 to great acclaim for its "modern" square design, aren't going away. They'll simply have to be addressed in other ways, officials say.

City plans to honor slain officer

By Bobby Bryant
Editor

The family of a slain police officer who lived in Darlington got a key to the city Nov. 13, and that's not all the honors City Council plans for Sgt. Terrence Carraway.

Council also hopes to rename a street and plans to name a playground after Carraway, a veteran Florence Police Department officer who was killed Oct. 3 when a Florence County gunman opened fire on several law-enforcement officers, wounding five and killing two.

"That's a hero," Darlington Mayor Gloria Hines said of Carraway, who she had known since he was a child.

The mayor presented Carraway's family with a golden key to the city, and council voted to endorse renaming Southern Pine Street after Carraway and naming a playground (a former Little League field) after him. Changing a street name will require an OK from the city planning commission and a public hearing.

Residents on the street will be contacted and asked for their reaction.

Names that council members discussed included "Sgt. Carraway Street," "Carraway Street" and "Sgt. T. Carraway Street."

"I'm just humbled," said the officer's widow, Allison. She said her husband's death was "a needless sacrifice," but added: "The legacy of Terrence Carraway will live on."

She and her family members got a standing ovation from the audience at the council meeting at City Hall.

Coming up: A \$245,000 playground

By Bobby Bryant
Editor

By spring, officials hope to unveil what will be the biggest playground in Darlington.

Darlington City Council on Nov. 13 voted to accept a \$245,000 bid to construct a large playground at Siskron and Hampton streets.

The funds are coming from hospitality-tax money, said Darlington County Recreation Director Lee Andrews.

The project, being handled by Georgia-based Bliss Products – "Bliss gave us more for the money," Andrews said – is expected to be completed sometime in the spring.

No date is set, Andrews said.

City Councilman Bryant Gardner, a longtime supporter of the project, said this is the result of years of effort on the part of many people, and he thanked council for moving forward.

YEAR ON 12

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES

All persons having claims against the following estates MUST file their claims on Form #371ES with the Probate Court of Darlington County, the address of which is Room 208 Courthouse, One Public Square, Darlington, SC 29532, within eight(8) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors or within one (1) year from date of death, whichever is earlier (SCPC 62-3-801, et seq.), or such persons shall be forever barred as to their claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements on the prescribed form (FORM

#371ES) indicating the name and the address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of any uncertainty as to the claim and a description of any security as to the claim. Estate: Barbara Wright Huneycutt Date of Death: 8/12/2018 Case No: 2018ES1600580 Personal Representative: Krystal Lynn Huneycutt Address: 112 N. Darlington Avenue, Lamar, SC 29069 (24p3 leave in thru 1-9-19)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES All persons having claims against the following estates MUST file their claims on Form #371ES with the

Probate Court of Darlington County, the address of which is Room 208 Courthouse, One Public Square, Darlington, SC 29532, within eight(8) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors or within one (1) year from date of death, whichever is earlier (SCPC 62-3-801, et seq.), or such persons shall be forever barred as to their claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements on the prescribed form (FORM #371ES) indicating the name and the address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of

any uncertainty as to the claim and a description of any security as to the claim. Estate: DeQuincey Adam Davis Date of Death: 11/23/2018 Case No: 2018ES16577 Personal Representative: Carolyn Simon Davis Address: 1529 Burkitts Lane, Darlington, SC 29532 Attorney: Albert L. James, III Address: P.O. Box 507, Darlington, SC 29540 (24c3 leave in thru 1-9-19)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES All persons having claims against the following estates MUST file their claims on Form #371ES with the Probate Court of Darlington County, the address of which is Room 208 Courthouse,

One Public Square, Darlington, SC 29532, within eight(8) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors or within one (1) year from date of death, whichever is earlier (SCPC 62-3-801, et seq.), or such persons shall be forever barred as to their claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements on the prescribed form (FORM #371ES) indicating the name and the address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of any uncertainty as to the claim and a description of any security as to the claim. Estate: Kenneth Wayne Soles Date of Death: 11/17/2018 Case No: 2018ES1600579 Personal Representative: Angela S. Soles Address: 319 Winners Circle, Hartsville, SC 29550 (24p3 leave in thru 1-9-19)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES All persons having claims against the following estates MUST file their claims on Form #371ES with the Probate Court of Darlington County, the address of which is Room 208 Courthouse, One Public Square, Darlington, SC 29532, within eight(8) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors or within one (1) year from date of death, whichever is

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Road, Darlington, SC 29532 (24p3 leave in thru 1-9-19)

NOTICE OF ABANDONED PROPERTY Notice is hereby given that the following property will have a title applied for in 30 days if the owner does not make claim: 2003 Ford, VIN # 3FADP37323R103874, abandoned at 1621 Harry Byrd Highway, PO Box 783, Darlington, SC 29532. Owner to contact: SC Department of Motor Vehicles, PO Box 1498, Blythewood, SC 29016-0024, customer no: 32186201 (25p3 leave in thru 1-16-19)



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JANUARY 2, 2019 | PAGE 11
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101 Georgia Drive—3 BR, 2 BA, 2206 SF—**\$169,900**
127 Spring Street—2 BR, 1.5 BA, 2098 SF—**\$167,900**
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108 Alabama Drive—3 BR, 2 BA, 1680 SF—**\$169,800**
722 Spring Street—4 BR, 3 BA, 2456 SF—**\$135,000**
104 Tennessee Drive—5 BR, 4 BA, 3844 SF—**\$249,900**
104 Oakview Drive—4 BR, 3F & 2 H BA, 3640 SF—**\$290,000**
111 Virginia Drive—5 BR, 4 BA, 4290 SF—**\$324,900**

LAND

421 1/2 Allen Street—.25 Acres—**\$4,500**
31.5 Acres Asland Road—**\$110,000**
TBD Cashua Ferry Road—.57 Acres—**\$15,900**
S. Center Road—47.46 Acres—**\$233,000**
Dewitt Circle—23.62 Acres—**\$141,720**
Dewitt Circle—29.58 Acres—**\$236,640**
TBD Evangeline Drive—.31 Acres—**\$25,000**
TBD First Street—.37 Acres—**\$12,900**
Green Street Road—141 Acres—**\$324,300**
Green Street Road—86.31 Acres—**\$198,513**
425 Guess Street—.25 Acres—**\$4,500**
E. Hampton Street—.46 Acres—**\$10,000**
Harry Byrd & Highway 151—7 Acres—**\$80,500**
Harry Byrd Highway—9.62 Acres—**\$110,700**
22 Acres Hibiscus Road—**\$68,500**
Highway 401—23 Acres—**\$112,700**

Hoffmeyer Road—154.45 Acres—**\$387,000**
Tract A Hwy 52 By-Pass & Road 409—.7 Acres—**\$12,000**
Tract B Hwy 52 By-Pass & Road 409—1.38 Acres—**\$25,000**
Lamar Highway—3.81 Acres—**\$16,900**
S. Main Street—.56 Acres—**\$17,500**
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00 Swift Creek Road—3.47 Acres—**\$24,900**
Lot 13 Wildshall Road—.84 Acres—**\$27,000**
Lot 15 Wildshall Road—.80 Acres—**\$27,000**
Lot 1 Wyandot Street—1.35 Acres—**\$45,000**
Lot 6 Wyandot Street—1.09 Acres—**\$45,000**
Lot 17 Wyandot Street—1.07 Acres—**\$40,000**

COMMERCIAL

116 S. Main Street—**\$155,000**
706 S. 5th Street—**\$369,000**
527 N. Main Street—**\$160,000**
676 E. McIver Road—**\$59,000**
307 Washington Street—**\$34,900**

321 N. Main Street—**\$64,909**
213 N. Marquis Hwy—**\$490,000**
1005 E. McIver Road—**\$129,900**

FOR LEASE

123 Erinvine Court—**\$900.00/Monthly**

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22 Acres Hibiscus Road 527 N. Main Street 706 S. 5th Street
127 Spring Street Lot 6 Wyandot Street

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Storage #314
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DONNETTE HUGHES
Storage #307
Boxes, bags, and misc. items
Total due: \$270.00

TONDA SCOTT
Storage #189
Boxes, bags, and misc. items
Total due: \$320.00

JEANISE DARGAN
Storage #39
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2116 Lide Springs Rd - 3 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, 2,818 sq ft, 9 acres, 2 large workshops and a cabin - **REDUCED \$299,995**

212 Cashua Ferry Rd - 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2,924 sq ft - **\$230,000**

119 Alabama Drive - 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 2,605 sq ft, 24 x 40 workshop - **\$169,900**

1381 Nolan Dr - 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, 1,700 sq ft, large workshop - **\$180,000**

2759 Cashua Ferry Rd - 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 983 sq feet - **\$89,900**

645 Gilchrist Road - 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 1,300 sq ft - **\$74,900**

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50 +/- acres on Cashua Ferry Rd - Great land for hunting. Some wetlands. Close to Great Pee Dee River. **\$150,000**

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B-1 Gilchrist Rd - .68 acre lot. Mobile home allowed. **\$14,000**

638 Cartersville - 1/2 acre lot with county water and septic tank. **\$10,000**

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COMMERCIAL

2244 Harry Byrd Hwy - Commercial bld. 11,684 sq ft metal building. Sits on 4+ acres of land. 6 ft fence around perimeter of property. Currently used as an office, warehouse, & Restaurant/ lounge. Plenty of office area. 5 restrooms. It would make a great church, restaurant, or banquet hall lots of potential uses. Conveniently located 4 miles from Darlington Raceway. Close to Hartsville and I-20. Owner will finance with a \$150,000 down payment. Call today to see this property. **Priced at \$750,000 REDUCED - Motivated seller, bring all offers**

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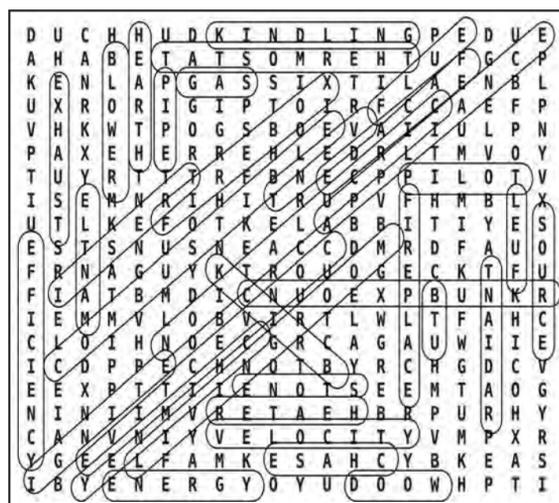
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Answers from Page 8



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Meet the stars of Dancing with the Stars of Darlington County

Welcome to the runup to the 2019 edition of Darlington County's Dancing with the Stars, an annual event that benefits the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault. The event will be held Thursday, Jan. 31, at 7:30 p.m. at Center Theater in Hartsville.

For the next several weeks, we'll be introducing couples who will be taking part in the event. You can go to the Pee Dee Coalition's website (www.DWTSoFDC.com) to vote your favorite couple for the People's Choice Award.

This week's featured couples:

Shantella Harris (professional) and Billy White (celebrity) – Dance style: disco; Decade: 1970s (choreographer: Shantella Harris)

Savage Watson (professional) and Ethan Rivera (celebrity) – Dance style: quickstep; Decade: 1960s (Choreographer: Savage Watson)

Photos are by Steve Roos.

Sponsors: Dr. Orville H. Dyce with Black Creek Medical; Carolina Bank; West Oil Company; Steve Roos with

Ashcraft Studio; Fitness Worldwide Gyms LLC; Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate - Segars Realty; Hartsville Family Dentistry; Sonoco Products Company; Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated; Hodge Ethridge Insurance and Financial Service - Nationwide Insurance; McLean Marechal Insurance and Financial Service - Nationwide Insurance; Duke Energy; Edwin Haenni; Curry and Debbie Dawkins; the Kiwanis Club of Hartsville; Darlington Family Pharmacy; Burry Bookstore; Wesley United Methodist Church; Coker College; First Citizens Bank; Wanda and Terry Hassler; Coble Wealth Management, LLC; Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center; Elsesser Custom Cabinetry; Hartsville Country Club; Fred and Vanessa Wilhelm; Palmetto Auto Auction; Danny and Whitney Dorsel

Dr. Dyce with Black Creek Medical is presenting this year's show.

Celebrity dancer Billy White takes pride in his Christian faith and living a Christ-like life. As a child, he learned about being a positive role model by joining the Boy Scouts. These values helped shape his life. Billy has always been involved in team and individual sports, which helped to mold him as a person. His career has always been to help others' lives be better tomorrow than today. In the past, he has had a career as a teacher, probation/parole agent and most importantly as a county magistrate for Darlington County. He took pride in ensuring stiff legal penalties to anyone who abused others.

Professional dancer Shantella Harris is a lifelong

resident of Florence, where she lives with her husband, Herbert, and their children, Miya (11), Sean (7), and Robyn (6). Shantella loves to travel, be outdoors, and is learning to ride a motorcycle. She is the owner and creative director of Driven by Dance Studio in Quinby. Shantella is a certified dance instructor with over 20 years of experience as both a dancer and dance instructor ranging from African, Ballet, Jazz, Modern and Liturgical dance. Shantella is honored to be a part of an event with such a meaningful cause.

Celebrity dancer Ethan Rivera is a native of Florence and spent his childhood in both the Florence and Hartsville communities. As a pastor's son, most of his early memories revolve around the churches he grew up in (Immanuel Baptist in Florence and Swift Creek Baptist in Hartsville) and he remains an active volunteer in the student and guest services ministries at his current church, Newspring Church in Florence. He is a graduate of Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School and Francis Marion University. During and immediately after college, Ethan worked and volunteered for numerous political campaigns and political officials, including the Florence office of U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and in Congressman Tom Rice's office in Washington. He is employed with ADP in Florence as an account manager. In addition to volunteering at his church, Ethan is an active volunteer with Family Promise of Florence and Operation Christmas Child. He enjoys watching sports of all kinds, especially Braves baseball and Gamecock football, but his favorite activity is



Shantella Harris and Billy White PHOTO BY STEVE ROOS



Savage Watson and Ethan Rivera PHOTO BY STEVE ROOS

going on road trips with his fiancé, Kassie Hughes. Ethan is participating in DWTS of Darlington County in honor of his mother, Carey, who worked for the Pee Dee Coalition against Domestic and Sexual Assault as a rape crisis counselor and shelter manager from 1987-90, and kept the Florence shelter open and operational in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo.

Professional dancer Savage Watson is owner of Savage Dance Productions in Bishopville. For 12 years, Savage was a competitive

dancer in Hartsville, as well as a teacher for six years. Following her high school graduation, she continued her dance education at Coker College where she recently graduated with a bachelor of arts in dance and a minor in business. Savage has been a large part of community outreach over the past several years for the company her father works for, Woodmen Life. Savage is excited and looking forward to helping raise money for the Pee Dee Coalition by doing what she loves most – dancing.

Year

Continued from 10

"This gives everyone in our community the ability to enjoy a nice playground. This is one of our biggest investments in the quality of life in Darlington in a number of decades."

DHS' football coach quits

By Bobby Bryant Editor

Darlington High School varsity football coach John Jones Jr. ended three years of frustration on the field by resigning Nov. 19, and school officials will "immediately" start the search for a new coach.

Jones, whose Falcons football team had won only three games in the past three years, resigned his post "to pursue other coaching opportunities," the Darlington County School District said in a news release last week.

The district said he will continue his teaching responsibilities at DHS.

Jones was hired as coach in 2015 and after a promising 6-5 first season, endured three brutal years of mostly losses. His record was 3-28 for his last three years as coach; he lost his last 12 games. For all four seasons as coach, his record was 9-33.

In the school district's news release, Darlington High School Principal Cortney Gehrke said:

"We appreciate the four years Coach Jones spent with our Falcon family. He has worked hard to share his passion, vision and determination with our students."

DECEMBER 2018

Lamar leaps onto the Internet

By Samantha Lyles Staff Writer

A 10-year campaign to bring broadband Internet to the town of Lamar has finally

paid off.

Charter Communications and Spectrum Cable announced last week that they will invest \$1 million to build a state-of-the-art network in the Lamar community.

"Internet is obviously a necessity. It is not a luxury. Rural communities all over are struggling to try and retain young people, and Internet is a must," said Ben Breazeale, senior director of government affairs for Charter Communications.

"I promise you all – and I'm not just putting on my corporate hat here – it's going to transform this community. This is 100 megabits of Internet going to almost every house in Lamar."

Breazeale said the new network will cover every street in town, and installation should be complete in late March or early April 2019.

He also announced that Charter-Spectrum will offer special pricing plans for lower-income customers.

Wells Fargo leaving town

By Bobby Bryant Editor

In a blow to Darlington's Public Square, Wells Fargo will close its downtown bank branch Feb. 20, the company has confirmed.

Because of "changes in customer behavior across the Pee Dee," Wells Fargo will shut down its bank at 58 Public Square, company spokeswoman Amy Amirault told the News & Press Nov. 28.

Wells Fargo customers in the Darlington area will still be able to do in-person business at the bank's branches in Hartsville and Florence, Amirault said.

The ATM at the bank's Public Square branch will be relocated next to the existing Wells Fargo ATM at 202 Lamar Highway, she said.

Lisa Chalian-Rock, the city's director of planning and economic development, said that city officials are already "trying to market the property to other businesses. . . . We've got a couple of people we are definitely targeting."

State issues school 'report cards'

By Bobby Bryant Editor

Most of Darlington County's public elementary schools fared badly in the S.C. Department of Education's newest round of "school report cards."

But some school-district officials around the state are attacking the report cards as biased, inaccurate, unfair and nearly worthless as a measure of how well students and schools are doing.

While Darlington County's four public high schools and four public middle schools all got what amounted to passing grades or higher on the state's school-by-school assessment, six of the county's nine public elementary schools were judged to be in danger of not meeting state standards for students, and one was rated as no longer meeting standards for students.

Only two elementary schools – Hartsville's Carolina Elementary and Lamar's Spaulding Elementary – got what amounted to passing grades from the state.

Darlington County Education Superintendent Tim Newman noted that the report cards had been revised and changed to such an extent that "this is an entirely new process for everyone involved, and we know there are flaws in the system."

Aid for Lamar's wastewater system

By Samantha Lyles Staff Writer

Lamar Town Council heard some good news at the start of its Dec. 10 regular meeting as Mayor Darnell Byrd McPherson announced the town would receive \$350,000 in state funding to help repair its wastewater system.

"We have to thank Sen. (Gerald) Malloy because we did receive an allocation of \$350,000 – hello!" said McPherson, who later noted that this money would largely cover the estimated \$348,000 in repairs needed to bring the wastewater system up to

scratch.

The town recently contracted with engineering firm Davis & Brown to become Lamar's water system distribution operator, which brings the town into compliance with an order from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

After Lamar parted ways with a previous operator (Hanna Engineering), they were without an operator for about two and a half weeks.

Paula Brown, a drinking water system inspector with DHEC's Florence office, explained that even though Lamar currently purchases all of its municipal water from Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority (DCWSA), that water still passes through Lamar's proprietary system of pipes, tanks and pumps.

"There's still a lot of



Rep. Robert Williams, Sen. Gerald Malloy, former Lamar mayor and current Darlington County Council chairman Bobby Hudson, Lamar Mayor Darnell Byrd-McPherson accept check from Charter-Spectrum for the Lamar Rescue Squad

responsibilities that go along with running a water system," said Brown.

"It's not just turning on a

faucet or flushing a toilet and we're good. There's a lot that goes into it."

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