

LOCAL NEWS

Nicholtown renewal project unveiled

Public housing project reworked into affordable homes

By E. Richard Walton

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The 50 acres once occupied by Jesse Jackson Townhomes have been transformed into Heritage Community, a project envisioned in 2003, with an infusion of \$86 million, community leaders said Thursday.

For many in the community, before it had a name, the project was known as the Nicholtown Hope VI Revitalization.

It sits off Laurens Road and Pleasantburg Drive in the middle of Greenville's first black community.

Peter Behringer of TCG Development said all the federal, state, city of Greenville and private stakeholders have remade 340 "JIT homes" into about 530 "affordable" places to live. Almost 60 homes are still to be built, said Vandana Sareen, a project manager for TCG.

Behringer said all those involved in a renewed Ni-

choltown wanted to reconstruct more than homes.

"We wanted to supply jobs and business opportunities for area residents," he said. Those involved also wanted to give Heritage residents a new "experience and a safe place to live and walk."

One resident, Meetchekore Nelson, 26, said she lived in JIT for 17 years before she relocated to a two-bedroom apartment in Heritage with her daughter in February. While it was

being built, she lived in another complex, she said.

Nelson said the fights, gunfire and commotion that plagued JIT are gone. "It's a quiet neighborhood," she said. "I just like it."

The Greenville Police Department said before JIT was razed that 20 percent of its 911 emergency calls came from the housing project.

Mayor Knox White led a contingent of elected officials at a ribbon-cutting Thursday, including Chandra Dillard, who was a

Greenville city councilwoman before her election to the state House of Representatives last year.

Dillard, White and other speakers praised the cooperation of the city, the Greenville Housing Authority, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, BB&T Bank, Creative Builders, Martin Riley, Associates, RAM Construction and the Nicholtown neighborhood itself.

"I can't say enough about the community," Dillard said. She said she frequent-

ly refers to the project as the ICAR of housing, after the automobile research facility growing off Laurens Road.

Margaret McJunkin, president of the Nicholtown Neighborhood Association, said Heritage is only the first step to knitting the community back together.

"It's going to take a little bit more to rebuild," she said.

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Man, 74, dies after Seneca crash

By E. Richard Walton

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A Seneca man died Thursday afternoon more than nine days after he suffered injuries in a single-vehicle crash on Wells Highway in Oconee County.

Robert E. Thomas, 74, of 327 E. Reedy Fork Road, died at 1:30 p.m. at Greenville Memorial Hospital, said Greg Long, a deputy coroner in Oconee County.

On June 2, Thomas was involved in a collision at Wells Highway and Strawberry Farm Road, Long said.

Boyfriend charged in shooting

By Paul Alongi

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A Greenville woman was in the hospital Thursday and her boyfriend was in jail after a shooting at a residence, deputies said.

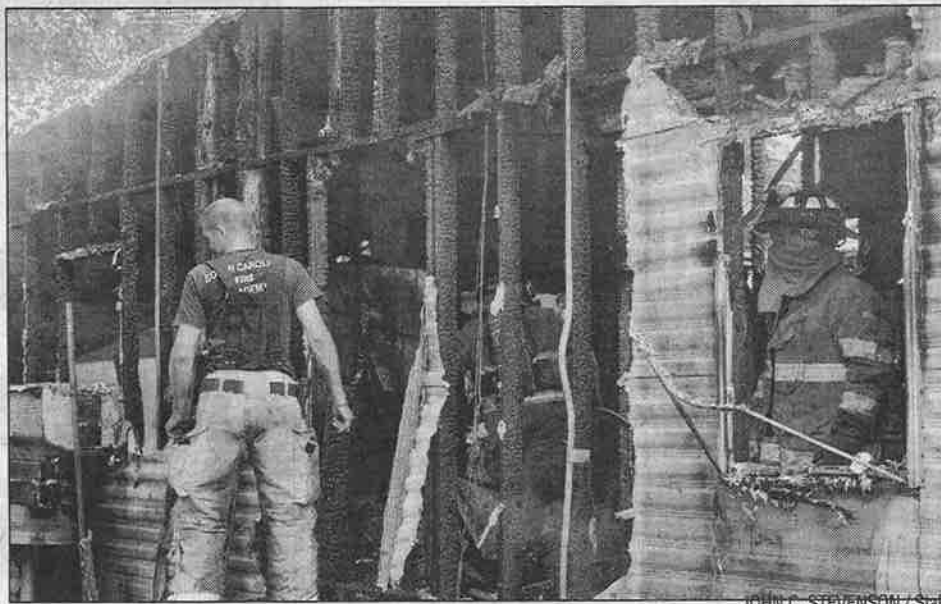
Investigators were told that Shaliska Rivers' 6-year-old daughter was home at 15 Bragg St. in the City View area late Wednesday when Rivers was shot multiple times, said Greenville County Master Deputy Melissa McKinney.

The daughter was unharmed, and Rivers, 25, was in stable condition at Greenville Memorial Hospital, McKinney said.

Deputies later responded to 427 Crosby Circle Joseph Gary, 36, McKinney said.

Gary was charged with assault and battery with intent to kill, being a felon in possession of a firearm and possession of a weapon during a violent crime, according to warrants.

Easley woman dead in mobile home fire



JOHN C. STEVENSON / Staff

Firefighters work to extinguish any remains of the fire that swept through a mobile home at 111 Mary Jane Drive in Easley on Thursday.

Neighbor attempted to look for her

By John C. Stevenson

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Officers were investigating a mobile home fire and the death of an Easley woman late Thursday.

The Pickens County Sheriff's Office said a call was received around 2:30

p.m. of a fire at 111 Mary Jane Drive south of Easley.

Neighbor David Kelley said he was sitting outside his home next door when he saw fire coming from the residence.

Kelley said he kicked in a door at the burning home in an attempt to find

the woman, but he couldn't see inside because of the smoke.

"There was so much popping and stuff," Kelley said. He couldn't hear any voices, he said.

The Crosswell and Easley city fire departments responded.

The name of the victim was being withheld late Thursday pending notification of relatives.

'Dining Room' a tasty feast

By Ann Hicks

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There are close to 20 separate scenes in A.R. Gurney's snarky play "The Dining Room," which makes its staging highly challenging, mainly because of all the overlapping dialogues, scenes and on- and off-stage traffic.

Veteran director Benjamin P. Robinson nailed all those challenges, along with six terrific actors who turned "The Dining Room" into a tasty feast at its Thursday night opening at Centre Stage. This production is one of the best and

THEATER REVIEW

also the last on the roster of this theater's current season.

Gurney's play mercilessly ridicules the mid-20th-century pretensions of America's WASP classes, placing all action in a well-appointed dining room where he turns his numerous characters into fun-house mirror reflections.

One of the strongest points of this production is that while there's a risk of gilding the lily, none of the actors — Cindy Mixon, Ka-

ty Beth Cassell, Anne Elizabeth Butler, Allen Evans, Jeff Warren and Christopher Evans — succumb to the urge to exaggerate the multiple characters they have to slip into at a moment's notice. Instead, along with the audience, they savor each succulent role and episode, from the bluntly humorous to the profoundly tragic.

Everything works here, from Lesley Preston's elegant set to Guy Perticone's expert lighting.

"The Dining Room" plays through June 27. For tickets, call 233-6733.

Haynsworth funds to enhance Pleasant Ridge

By Abe Hardesty

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Camp Courage, a summer camp for children diagnosed with cancer and blood disorders, took another step toward becoming a full-time entity Thursday.

Knox and Priscilla Haynsworth, founders of a charity known as Clement's Kindness, said the organization will donate \$500,000 toward a permanent home for Camp Courage, which will be part of the Pleasant Ridge Camp Conference and Retreat Center now under construction in northern Greenville County.

When completed, the Clement's Kindness Cabins and Recreation Center will enable more than 100 children and teen cancer patients to enjoy Camp Courage for a full week each summer and will provide patients and their families with weekend retreat opportunities throughout the year.

"It's something we've dreamed about for 15 years," said Dr. Cary Stroud, pediatric oncologist at the Children's Hospital and a staff member at

the camp since its inception in 1994.

"Now we can offer our patients a full week of summertime recreational and therapeutic activities, giving them an opportunity to enjoy so many of the outdoor and camping experiences they have missed out on because of their chronic illnesses."

GHS director of development George Maynard said the gift will help provide a setting that will make Pleasant Ridge "one of the premier therapeutic parks in the United States."

Maynard said the gift lifts Camp Courage funding "close to the first million" of \$2 million that GHS has committed to the project.

The camp is expected to be fully operational next summer.

Pleasant Ridge, a 280-acre County Park near the intersection of State 11 and U.S. 25, will also be home to Camp Spearhead, which is operated by the Greenville County Recreation District.

Clement's Kindness is a 6-year-old nonprofit organization devoted to helping the families of children with cancer. It is named in honor of Clement Haynsworth, the Haynsworths' late son.

Camp Courage has been held at Camp Greystone in Tuxedo, N.C., annually one weekend in May and September.



GEORGE GARDNER / Staff

Priscilla and Knox Haynsworth, co-founders of Clement's Kindness, announce a gift of \$500,000 to the GHS Children's Hospital for Camp Courage for kids with cancer.

Man found dead in yard

By Paul Alongi

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er, 32, had a cut bandaged by paramedics and wasn't taken to a hospital, said Deputy Matthew Armstrong, spokesman for the

two counts of violating the child restraint law, according to warrants and tickets.

Deputy B.C. Cannon wrote in an incident report

uty detected a strong aroma of freshly burned marijuana, Armstrong said. Three juveniles as young as 4 were in the car, accord-

ties received a call at 12:35 a.m. about a man found in the yard of 320 Shaw St., off

Greenville County sheriff's deputies are conduct-