

CoffeeBreak

Page 3A // The Brunswick News // Thursday, December 21, 2017



SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS / LAUREN MCDONALD

"We're very blessed in our community to have some wonderful people and agencies who help promote services and resources for people in need." — **Julie Ackerman**

Frederica Academy students donate gifts

One by one, the Frederica Academy students placed gifts of all shapes and sizes underneath the Christmas tree and returned to their seats.

The gifts will soon be distributed to children in Glynn County through local agencies that provide assistance to families in need.

Frederica Academy's lower school hosted its annual Giving Tree ceremony Wednesday. Family members were also invited to celebrate Christmas before the holiday break.

The students sang for their parents, and the school received a visit from Santa Claus.

"Christmas really is a great time of joy, and that's what we're experiencing together," said Ellen Fleming, the head of school at Frederica Academy. "But most importantly, the whole reason we have Christmas is to celebrate the birth of the Christ child."

Frederica's students were encouraged to take part in the giving spirit of Christmas by thinking of other children in the community during the holiday season.

In the days before the ceremony, students brought in gifts that will be donated to children their own age.

The gifts will be donated to Safe Harbor Children's Center, Morningstar Children and Family Services, Communities in Schools, Coastal Coalition for Children and Amity House, a local shelter for victims of domestic violence.

"We're very blessed in our community to have some wonderful people and agencies who help promote services and resources for people in need," said Julie Ackerman, director of the lower school. "We're also blessed to have all of you who want to help



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

Santa leads the audience in a Christmas song during his visit to the Frederica Academy lower schools giving tree ceremony Wednesday.



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

Frederica Academy lower school students light candles and recite the story of the birth of Christ during the school's annual giving tree ceremony Wednesday.

others give the gift of friendship while also offering a gift."

Spotlight on Schools appears Thursdays.

Contact Lauren McDonald at lmcdonald@thebrunswicknews.com or at 912-265-8320, ext. 322 to suggest a topic for a column.

IN THE STATE

Louisiana firm pleads guilty to dumping waste in Georgia

SAVANNAH: Authorities say a Louisiana company has pleaded guilty to transporting and dumping hazardous waste in a neighborhood in Savannah, Georgia.

Federal prosecutors in Georgia said Wednesday that New Orleans-based Boasso America Inc., which has a facility near Savannah, was sentenced to five years of probation.

Boasso was also ordered to pay restitution, including cleanup costs; a \$500,000 penalty; and to establish, implement, and enforce an effective environmental compliance plan.

Prosecutors said the case involves tank containers that held hazardous waste.

Authorities said two employees illegally transported and dumped a signifi-

cant amount of a chemical known as naphthalene into the ground of a Savannah neighborhood in 2015.

Officials say law enforcement and environmental workers quickly cleaned up the waste after it was discovered.

Company representatives didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

ATLANTA: Three former soldiers who have spent more than 25 years in prison for a killing their lawyers say they didn't commit will likely get to spend the holidays with their families.

A judge in Savannah set bail at \$30,000 apiece Wednesday for Mark Jones, Kenneth Gardiner and Dominic Lucci. Their lawyers expected them to be freed later Wednesday.

The Georgia Supreme Court last month ruled that the three men are entitled to a new trial because state prosecutors improperly withheld evidence that would have helped their defense. Prosecutors haven't said yet whether they'll retry the case.

The three white men were soldiers at Fort Stewart when they were arrested in nearby Savannah and charged with murder in the Jan. 31, 1992, killing of Stanley Jackson, who was black.

SANDERSVILLE: A grand jury in Georgia has indicted three white former sheriff's deputies on murder charges for their alleged roles in the stun gun death of a 58-year-old black man who they said acted "suspiciously" after asking a stranger

for water.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports Tuesday's indictment charges the Washington County ex-deputies — Michael Howell, Henry Copeland and Rhett Scott — with felony murder, false imprisonment and aggravated assault in the death of Euree Lee Martin.

District Attorney Hayward Altman says there was no evidence that Martin had broken any laws at the time he encountered police on July 7.

Mawuli Davis, attorney for Martin's family, says bench warrants have been issued and arrests are expected soon.

Howell, Copeland and Scott were fired in October in connection with the case.

—Associated Press

editor, for bridal, clubs, churches or awards: 912-265-8320, ext. 346

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