



WADMALAW

Newsletter - Issue 2

August 2016

WADMALAW ISLAND LAND PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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WADMALAW ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

Bertha Smalls-Middleton
Director

WADMALAW STUDENT AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP HONORING EMANUEL VICTIM



Shaniyah Wrighton



Ethel Lance

Shaniyah Wrighton, 18, of Wadmalaw Island, was awarded a scholarship by the Ethel Lance Content of Our Character Foundation in May. Ms. Wrighton, a student athlete and Air Force Reservist, will attend Clark University in Atlanta this fall to pursue a degree in chemistry.

"I was both honored and blessed to have been awarded a scholarship from the Ethel Lance Content of Our Character Foundation," said Ms. Wrighton.

The foundation was established by the family of Ethel Lance, who was killed in the Emanuel AME Church shooting last summer. Its purpose is to support the educational needs of students on Wadmalaw Island, where Lance had roots. *(continued on page 2)*

JOHNS ISLAND ROAD IMPROVEMENT TASK FORCE – COUNTY COUNCIL VOTES AUGUST 9TH

Traffic congestion on Johns Island increases every month and will increase further with the start of the school year. Clearly this impacts everyone living on Wadmalaw. The "pitch-fork" road project already approved for Maybank Highway at River Road will provide some relief but more needs to be done to manage traffic generated by the new housing developments currently under construction or either planned or approved by Charleston City Council on Johns Island.

(continued on page 2)

SAVING EDITH FRIERSON

It is well known that the Charleston County School District (CCSD) is facing a real and significant budget crisis which has already resulted in the closure of Lincoln High School in McClellanville. The CCSD has identified other schools throughout Charleston County as potential candidates for closure as well, including Wadmalaw's elementary school, Edith L. Frierson.

Eric Mack, the school board member representing our district, successfully lobbied for Frierson to remain open for this coming school year despite its low enrollment. However, CCSD has not committed to keeping it open beyond that.

Issues regarding low attendance at the school have been frequently reported to the community through

(continued on page 4)

JOIN THE ISLAND LITTER PICK-UP SEPTEMBER 10TH

The next island-wide litter pick-up will take place on Saturday, September 10th.

Join your neighbors to help make Wadmalaw beautiful. Volunteers should meet at 8:30 AM at the Community Center, 5605 Katy Hill Road.

Please join us!

LABOR DAY FESTIVAL AND PARADE CANCELLED FOR 2016

The WICC will not host the Annual Labor Day Festival and Parade this year. The event takes a lot of planning and funding and at the present time there is not enough support within the community to hold the event. A Fall Festival in October is a possibility and the WICC is seeking suggestions from the community. If you are interested in an October event, please contact the Community Center at 843-789-4885.

WADMALAW ISLAND CHURCHES

Grace Chapel

Chapel of Ease of
St. John's Church
Rockville Township
Services in June, July and
August at 9:00 AM

Little Rock Baptist Church

6522 Maybank Highway
Rev. James Peterson, Pastor
Services at 11:30 AM
Bible study and prayer on
Wednesdays at 7:00 PM

New Bethlehem Baptist Church

1945 Liberia Road
Rev. William Jackson,
Interim Pastor
Services at 11:00 AM

New Jerusalem AME Church

6179 Bears Bluff Road
Rev. Joseph Swinton, Jr., Pastor

New St. James Bethel AME Church

5305 Maybank Highway
Rev. William R. Jones, Pastor
Services at 10:00 AM

New Webster United Methodist Church

4755 Bears Bluff Road
Rev. Leonard Huggins, Pastor
Rev. Tony Richardson, Sr.,
Associate Pastor
Services at 10:15

Rockville Presbyterian Church

2489 Sea Island Yacht Club Road
Rev. Mark Hunt, Pastor
Services at 10:00 AM

Salem Baptist Church

5768 Bears Bluff Road
Rev. Martha Florence Brown,
Pastor
Services at 11:00 AM

Salem Presbyterian Church

5591 Maybank Highway
Rev. Robert L. Capers, Pastor
Services at 11:00 AM on 2nd
and 4th Sundays, 9:30 AM on
1st and 3rd.

WADMALAW STUDENT AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP HONORING EMANUEL VICTIM

(continued from front cover)

Lance, 70, the church's custodian, was known as a hardworking woman who spent countless hours at the church and believed strongly in the value of education.

According to Audrey Mack, "the foundation was founded on the premise of rising above hate and doing something positive." The scholarship was presented on 19 May to Ms. Wrighton, a St. John's High School senior, by Lance's daughter, Nadine Collier.

The foundation will award annual \$1,500 scholarships to fund tuition and books for a St. John's High senior pursuing a two- or four-year college or university degree. The family hopes to raise enough donations to award multiple scholarships each year.

Any additional funding beyond the scholarships will be used to support unfilled academic needs at Edith L. Frierson Elementary School on Wadmalaw.

The foundation's board includes Ms. Mack, her sister Patricia Mack Miller, Israel Rivers, Bertha Smalls Middleton, Kimberly Davis (Principal of Edith L. Frierson High), Andre Dukes (Principal of St. John's High), Dr. Sandra Middleton, Andrew Payne and Kelly Skinner, chairman.

JOHNS ISLAND ROAD IMPROVEMENT TASK FORCE – COUNTY COUNCIL VOTES AUGUST 9TH

(continued from front cover)

Charleston County Council has discussed proposing a referendum to voters to approve a ½ cent sales tax increase to fund road improvement projects throughout the county. A task force on Johns Island, with representatives from Johns Island, Wadmalaw, Kiawah and Seabrook, made road improvement recommendations to County Council. Four projects were identified: 1) Construction of a fly-over for Highway 17 over Main Road to keep traffic flowing in that area; 2) Four lane Main Road from Bees Ferry Road to Maybank Highway; 3) Four lane Maybank Highway from the Stono Bridge to the Post Office; and 4) Construct a 2-lane limited access roadway across Johns Island, utilizing existing right-of-ways, from Betsy Kerrigan to Maybank Highway (exact location TBD). Green space acquisition was also part of the recommendation.

As this newsletter went to press, a decision on the referendum as well as details on Johns Island projects to be included had not been finalized by County Council who were scheduled to hold a final vote August 9th. Check the Post and Courier for outcome and final details on this tax increase proposal.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE OF *WADMALAW* ARE:

April Long, Patricia Miller,
Stuart McDaniel, Kevin Richbourg,
John Shannon and Robert Siedell.

CHURCH NEWS

New Jerusalem AME Church, 6179 Bears Bluff Road, will have its 130th Church Anniversary on Sunday August 28th during the morning worship service which begins at 9 AM. The community is invited to this joyous occasion.

Rev Joseph Swinton, Jr., Pastor

WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS?



If you have an immediate or urgent concern about the safety or quality of your home's water, there are government grant and loan programs available to help with such problems. Conditions and guidelines

for eligibility are different depending on the program. Information and applications are available at Wadmalaw Island Land Planning Committee meetings, which are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month (except August) at 7:00 PM at the Community Center. Assistance in completing applications can be arranged.

Wadmalaw ONLINE

Wadmalaw Island Land Planning Committee website: www.wilpc.org

Community Center Facebook: Wadmalaw Island Community Center

WILPC Email address: comments@wilpc.org

Wadmalaw News: wadmalawnews@gmail.com

WHERE TO TAKE HOUSE GUESTS

If you're looking for unusual places to take your guests, here are two local businesses that can provide interesting "Wadmalaw experiences."

At 6775 Bears Bluff Road in a curve near the end of Wadmalaw can be found two unique businesses: Deep Water Vineyard and Firefly Distillery.

Deep Water (previously called Irvin House Vineyard) makes five different muscadine wines from the vines on the premises. Open Tuesday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Deep Water offers wine tasting for \$5.00 with a free wine glass to take home. On Saturday, August 27, the vineyard will offer their biggest event of the year: The Grape Stomp. Parking space is limited so be sure and purchase tickets (\$10/car) ahead of time at www.deepwatervineyard.com. Cost of admission will be higher at the gate and those with tickets will be admitted first. Gates open at 10:00 and the event continues until 5:00 with bands, food trucks and activities for all. The annual favorite is the "Lucy Look-Alike" Contest. Bring the family and a chair to sit in. Telephone: (843) 559-6867.

Next to the Vineyard is **Firefly Distillery**, home of the famous Firefly Vodka. The distillery now offers over 25 varieties of flavored vodka, bourbon and moonshine. Open Tuesday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Firefly offers a tasting of six spirits (you pick) and a shot glass for \$6:00. There is a gift shop on the premises selling tee shirts, kitchen items and locally made crafts while the beautiful grounds are made just for strolling under grand oaks. Telephone: (843) 557-1405.

Located at 6617 Maybank Highway, on 127 acres less than a mile past Edith L. Frierson Elementary School, the **Charleston Tea Plantation** is open to the public Monday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 12:00 to 4:00. America's ONLY tea producer, the farm has a beautiful gift shop offering free tea samples to sip as you take a 15-minute tour of the factory. Visitors may also take a 35-minute trolley ride through the grounds for \$10 per person (\$5 for children under 12). **The tea plantation will give one free trolley ride for Wadmalaw residents with every paying guest. Just bring your proof of residency (SCDL or picture ID) and sit back and enjoy the ride!** Telephone: (843) 559-0383.



COUNTY ROADS ON WADMALAW

In our last issue we mistakenly reported that all roads not maintained by the State were maintained by Charleston County. Benjamin Blanks of the Charleston County Public Works Department pointed out that there are many private roads on Wadmalaw that are not County maintained. The following roads are the only ones maintained by Charleston County: **Allandale Plantation, Andros, Arman, Back A Wood, Ben Jones, Bendit, Bentz, Bradley Johnson, Brigger Hill, Charles Brown, Damon, Dan Murray, Dolly, Dunwell, Estale, Gilgrim, Granite, Hezkiah, Judge Linen, Katy Hill, Keystone, Kite, Leadenwah, Little Smith, Livingston, Marina, Martins Point, McCants, McCullough Dam, Pecanetta, Peterson, Popcorn Haven, Riley, Rosebank, Russell, Sadie, Slim, Smiley, Tacky Point Ext., White Peterson, and Willcap.** To report maintenance issues regarding these roads, please contact Charleston County Public Works, Tel. (843) 202-7600

In addition, **Grace Chapel, Hart, and Sea Island Yacht Club roads are maintained by the Town of Rockville.** To report issues on these roads, contact Mayor Riley Bradham at Tel. (843)214-0539

And finally, for issues regarding State maintained roads (**Maybank, Bears Bluff, Liberia, Boy Scout, Harts Bluff, Yellow House**), please report any issues to Charleston County SCDOT Office at (843)740-1655.

JOIN US AT THE WILPC MEETINGS

The Wadmalaw Land Planning Committee (WILPC) meets at 7:00 PM the second Tuesday of every month (except August) at the Wadmalaw Community Center on Katy Hill Road. All residents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

NEED ACCESS TO INTERNET / PRINTING?

Just over the bridge and past the BiLo is the John's Island Regional Library at 3531 Maybank Highway. Open Monday-Thursday 10:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m., the library provides free internet access and has numerous workstations available. Don't know where to start? Ask any of the librarians and they will be happy to walk you through the process. All you need is a photo ID to gain access by one of three ways:

- 1) Library Card: Charleston County residents may apply for a free library card by showing proof of residence on a photo ID.
- 2) Guest Pass: good for one day to use the internet.
- 3) Internet Card: Good for more than one day and you do not have to be a Charleston County resident.

You may also scan documents or email them for free. Printing costs 10 cents per page for black and white or 25 cents per page for color.

You may also be interested to know that voter registration forms are available at the desk and that notary service is available by appointment. **Telephone: 843-559-1945.**

OUR RURAL LIVING ADVANTAGE – AVAILABLE LOCAL PRODUCTS

Most residents are probably aware of some of the farms and businesses that have been on Wadmalaw for years. But did you know that we also have farmers and entrepreneurs on our Island who produce raw, unpasteurized milk, delicious pork from sustainably and humanely raised heritage breeds, gourmet oyster mushrooms, and scrumptious cookies and pastries? Some of these items are available at the Johns Island Farmers Market, which now can accept SNAP payments. This list is not complete, but below are some of the local businesses on our island. The more we can support our farmers and local businesses, the greater chance we have to preserve the rural and agricultural nature of this beautiful Island we all love.

Business/Contact	Product
Ambrose Farms * 2349 Black Pond Rd. stonofarmmarket.com	U-Pick and CSA veggies and fruit Check website for current hours and to see what's growing
Bugby Plantation 2090 Bugby Plantation Rd. 843-209-3246	Seasonal U-Pick veggies and fruit Look for the sign by the road or just give Adair a call
Charleston Tea Plantation 6617 Maybank Hwy. charlestonteaplantation.com	North America's only tea plantation
Cherry Point Seafood 2789 Cherry Point Rd	Local shrimp and seafood
Deep Water Vineyard 6775 Bears Bluff Rd. deepwatervineyard.com	Formally Irvin House Vineyard Authentic muscadine wine Charleston's only domestic winery
East Coast Seafood 2659 Cherry Point Rd.	Local shrimp and seafood
Holy City Hogs holycityhogs.com	Sustainably, humanely raised, heritage breed pork and sausage.
Holy City Farms * holycityfarms.com	Heirloom tomatoes
Sea Island Jerseys * seaislandjerseys@gmail.com Email Celeste for more info.	Raw unpasteurized milk and beef available at Rosebank Plantation, Charleston Farmers Market, Stono Market and Meat House Butcher shop on Johns Island
Two Fat Cooks * twofatcooks.com	Homemade cookies, pastries and other delicacies
Whitemarsh Farm * fb.me/whitemarshfarm	Locally grown Gourmet oyster mushrooms

humanely raised heritage breeds, gourmet oyster mushrooms, and scrumptious cookies and pastries? Some of these items are available at the Johns Island Farmers Market, which now can accept SNAP payments. This list is not complete, but below are some of the local businesses on our island. The more we can support our farmers and local businesses, the greater chance we have to preserve the rural and agricultural nature of this beautiful Island we all love.

* Available most weeks at the Johns Island Farmers Market, Sat. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



SAVING EDITH FRIERSON

(continued from front cover)

the Constituent School Board and the WILPC Education Committee.

To safeguard the future of Edith Frierson, by mid-August a Task Force is required to identify ways to increase enrollment at the school to keep it open. Budgets for CCSD are planned throughout the fall with the final vote on funding individual schools in late November or early December.

Volunteers to serve on this task force are urgently needed, especially parents of current students. Also needed is someone to accept the role of Task Force chairperson.

If you want to see Edith Frierson remain open and are willing to offer your support on this Task Force, please contact WILPC Education Committee members Kelly Skinner or Patricia Miller at skink@gmail.com.

INVITATION FOR CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES TO NEWSLETTER

Wadmalaw is a publication to support the Wadmalaw Land Planning Committee (WILPC) and to provide information for island residents. It is currently being published quarterly. If you have suggestions for topics or stories or you would like to contribute to an upcoming issue, please contact us by email at: wadmalawnews@gmail.com

WICC BACK TO SCHOOL GIVEAWAY – THANK YOU SPONSORS!

WICC would like to thank our Community Partners, Tawana Seabrook of C.A.R.E LLC Wedding and Event Planners, and Mrs. Louise Maybank, sponsors of the 2016 Back to School Supply Giveaway for Community children held August 4th at the Community Center.

WADMALAW HISTORY - HART'S BLUFF CEMETERY



Salem Baptist Church Cemetery

Today anyone passing by the tranquil Salem Baptist Church cemetery on Harts Bluff Road could be forgiven for imagining that it was always so. But only a dozen years ago it was almost destroyed and might have disappeared forever but for the passion of local residents. Hart's Bluff Cemetery, or Hart's Cemetery, to use two traditional names, is an African-American burial ground on the north side of Wadmalaw Island overlooking the Wadmalaw Sound. Originally the land was part of a large plantation tract belonging to the Hart family, which acquired it in 1850. The plantation raised rice and cotton with an estimated slave labor force of 20 or more.

Although there is evidence that the cemetery was in use in 1890, it dates back much further, probably to antebellum times. During that period, slave burial grounds were often located on land considered unsuitable for farming like swamps and marshes, which were believed to carry the risk of malaria. However, first time it was identified

as a cemetery was in a 1952 plat. It appears thereafter in other plats. Curiously, the measurements in each are inconsistent: .44 acres in 1952, .41 acres in 1982, .46 acres in 1989. It was never surveyed precisely.

A 2005 study (see final paragraph below) noted that the cemetery contained 37 marked graves dating from 1890 to 1981. But based on historic documentation, oral traditions, and an archeological examination of sections of the cemetery, the report concludes that it contains at minimum 400 burials and possibly as many as 700.

In 1989 the Hart family sold a lot, including the cemetery, to new owner who leveled and graded the ground before building a house. Some say that she was never at peace there. She sold the property in 2001 to a new set of owners who later discovered the land had been used as a cemetery. In 2004 they presented authorities with documents and skeletal remains found on the property. Police began an investigation to find out what had happened. The investigation was hampered by the cemetery's age, a lack of records and few witnesses. The investigation was closed in 2006 with no charges brought.

The owners stopped paying the mortgage and the bank took over the property. Because it was demonstrably in or on a burial ground, it could not be sold as a residence. The bank made inquiries in the community as to how to dispose of it. Thelma David, a resident of Harts Bluff Road, recommended that it be donated to Salem Baptist Church on Bears Bluff Road, which had no cemetery. Her father had been the pastor there and her mother the church secretary. The bank agreed with the stipulation that the house be entirely removed to avoid any risk of liability in the future. Thelma's brother, Benny Smalls, and a group of church volunteers gathered to strip the house of all usable materials before a demolition crew came to tear it down and remove the structure. Today no trace of the house remains.

Detailed information on the history, size and number of graves in the cemetery may be found in the report by the Chicora Foundation produced in 2005. (See: <http://www.chicora.org/pdfs/RC428%20-%20Hart's%20Bluff.pdf>.)

WILPC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 2016

A report on the statistics of E.L. Frierson Elementary was delivered. Low enrollment and the high cost of operation puts our school in jeopardy of being closed by the Charleston County School District (CCSD). It was agreed that a letter of support for Rev. Eric Mack, our CCSD school board representative, be written and signed by the full committee acknowledging his hard work and efforts to help keep E. L. Frierson Elementary School open.

MAY 2016

Rev. Eric Mack addressed the meeting and delivered a detailed report on the Charleston County School budget and how it impacts E. L. Frierson Elementary School. He outlined several options and directions that can help to ensure that our island keeps its school. The Constituent School Board meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 5:30 PM at Haut Gap School and it is suggested that residents attend these meetings and voice their ideas and concerns to the school board.

Former committee member Lewis Hay brought to our attention the Johns Island Task Force's plans to present a unified set of priorities to County

Council for road improvements on Johns Island. The Committee is learning more about their suggestions and is considering adding our support to this group.

JUNE 2016

The Johns Island Council has requested the Committee join in their request for a "Smart" traffic light at the intersection of Maybank Hwy and River Rd. Upon review the Committee unanimously decided to support the request and a letter was sent to the Mayor of Charleston and County Council in support.

An application to the Zoning and Planning Department for a special exception permit for an Event Venue on Wadmalaw Island was reviewed. A unanimous decision to oppose that application was made and a letter was sent to the Board of Zoning Appeals. It is known that many others on the Island expressed their objections as well, and the application was withdrawn.

Mrs. Mary Jones has become our new Fire Commissioner for Wadmalaw Island and asked that she be contacted at 843-559-1185 for any questions or concerns regarding fires or safety.

WADMALAW NEWS

c/o Wadmalaw Island Community Center

P. O. Box 46

5605 Katy Hill Road

Wadmalaw Island, SC 29487

Email: wadmalawnews@gmail.com



REAL ESTATE

WADMALAW RECENT REAL ESTATE SALES

Only one residential property and one parcel of vacant land were sold during the May - July period on Wadmalaw. Those sales were:

Home: 5990 Selkirk Plantation Sale Price: \$708,750

Vacant Land: Corner Bears Bluff & Liberia Road, 35.13 acres Sale Price: \$340,000

WADMALAW BY THE NUMBERS

Total Population: 2,863

Male: 45.4% Female: 54.6%

African American: 51%; White: 46%; Hispanic & Other: 3%

Median Age: 50.3 years old

0-19 years: 20% 50-65 years: 31.7%

20-34 years: 12.4% 65 + years: 19.6%

34-49 years: 16.3%

High School graduation percentage: 83.9%

Total number of residences: 1,311

Veterans: 291

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014 estimates