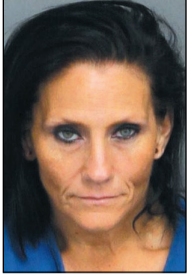


Late meth plea results in 3-year sentence

By John Clayton
Editor

A last-minute plea deal resulted in a three-year prison sentence on drug charges for a Spartanburg County woman Wednesday at the Hillcrest Judicial Complex.



Melissa D. Evans

Melissa Dawn Evans, 44, pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine after accepting a plea arrangement from the 8th Circuit Solicitor's Office. She was originally charged with trafficking in ice, crack or crack after more than 18 grams of methamphetamine were discovered during a

search of her vehicle by the Laurens Police Department on Aug. 27, 2015.

After hearing the facts surrounding the case from Assistant Solicitor Jared Simmons and a plea for leniency from defense attorney Ricky Harris, Judge Frank Addy, Jr. imposed the three-year sentence with credit for 30 days time served.

"To say that Laurens County has a problem with meth is somewhat of an understatement," Addy said before pronouncing sentence. Evans agreed to plead guilty to avoid the three-year mandatory minimum sentence that would have accompanied the trafficking charge had a jury found her guilty. Even so, Evans is to spend the majority of the next three years in prison.

Harris painted Evans as a woman whose life spiraled

into addiction after a severe accident left her disabled and dependent on painkillers. He said Evans sought treatment and has been clean and sober for the past three years since the arrest.

Despite the defense's request for leniency, Addy said he could not send the message that such actions will be tolerated here given the county's overall problems with opioid abuse.

Evans was arrested after officers from the Laurens Police Department responded to a shoplifting call from Walmart. There, they found Evans, another woman and that woman's small child in the store's parking lot and searched the vehicle they were in.

During the search, they discovered more than 18 grams of methamphetamine hidden in a child's Teddy Bear backpack.



Photo by Suzanne Lowry

HOIST IT HIGH — Members of the Laurens Academy football team are joined by the varsity cheerleaders as they celebrate their Sept. 13 victory over W.W. King and the return of "The Sword" to the Crusaders after a two year absence. A tradition begun in 2008, the mounted revolutionary war era sword is claimed each year by the victor of the gridiron contest between the Crusaders and Knights.

— West Nile —

(Continued from page 1)

West Nile by feeding on infected birds.

DHEC monitors the spread of West Nile through birds, focusing on five types — fish crows, blue jays, house finches, dead house finches and American crows.

The county has contracted with Gregory Pest Solutions to spray this Friday evening for mosquitos in the area where the infected bird was found. The spray is safe for humans, but those with respiratory illnesses should stay indoors if the pesticides are being sprayed nearby.

Avery said the county is following DHEC recommenda-

tions on dealing with the mosquitos. The mosquito population has been up this year due to heavy rains, including recent rains this past weekend from Hurricane Florence.

"We're hoping to get some colder temperatures over the next few weeks to kill off most of the mosquito population," Avery said.

In addition to spraying this Friday in the northern area of the county, Avery said a second spraying is scheduled for Sept. 27 in the southeastern part of the county where the first case of West Nile was reported.

Representatives from Gregory Pest Solutions, who will have county and company identification with them, will

also be conducting door-to-door education in both areas.

Avery urges local residents to check their property for potential mosquito breeding areas, including any puddles or anything that might contain stagnant or standing water.

Avery said local beekeepers are also being notified about the spraying both directly and through the Laurens County Beekeepers Association due to the possibility of harming the beehives.

Further information on mosquitos and the West Nile virus can be found online at scdhec.gov/homeandenvironment/insects/mosquitoes or by calling DHEC at 864-227-5918.

Croft accepts invitation to attend GSSM

David Croft from Laurens County has accepted an invitation to attend the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) in Hartsville. He joins 145 students from 91 high schools and 32 counties across South Carolina to form the Class of 2020. GSSM's student body of 286 juniors and seniors moved onto campus in mid-August and began classes on Aug. 20.

The beginning of the 2018-2019 school year kicks off a year-long celebration of GSSM's 30th anniversary of its founding. "We are honored to continue serving some of the best and brightest students in South Carolina," reflected Dr. Hector Flores, President of GSSM.

David Croft, child of Mr. Kevin Croft, was accepted into

GSSM from Ninety Six High School.

Acceptance into GSSM's rigorous residential program is through a selective process that identifies the state's most capable high school scholars. It reflects high academic and personal achievement and is a positive reflection on their school and community.

For 30 years, GSSM has been one of the nation's top ranked residential high schools, serving the state's highest achieving juniors and seniors. It offers unique, college-level courses and a hands-on curriculum with a special focus on science, technology,

engineering, math and research, along with concentrations in economics and entrepreneurship, as well as a full array of humanities courses.

One of 12 specialized science and math programs in the country, the School has been nationally recognized for its overall excellence, strong mix of intellectual challenges and dedicated teachers, as well as its rigorous mentored scientific and economic research program.

For more information on how to apply for GSSM's class of 2021, visit: <http://www.scgssm.org/admissions/residential-admissions>.

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Thank you all family and friends for attending my 80th surprise birthday party at The Ridge in Laurens, SC on August 18, 2018. I was surprised and happy to see everyone. It was such a wonderful, blessed and memorable occasion. My apologies for the late thank you notice.
Native SC resident,
Vera Henderson-Latimer

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL FFA FALL PLANT SALE

Sept. 27-28 - Tues.-Fri. 10:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Oct. 1-3 - Mon.-Fri. 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Oct. 8-10 - Mon.-Fri. 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Closed for lunch from 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. each day.

Plant Sales:
Mums • \$7 and \$16 (yellow, purple, orange, & red)
Majestic Giant Pansies • 18-count trays \$12 (blue, white, yellow, & mixed)
Trailing Pansy Hanging Baskets • \$10 (mixed colors)
Snapdragons • 18-count trays \$12 (mixed colors)
Ornamental Kale • \$4
Fall Vegetables Plants \$1.50 per plant (kale, spinach, collards, broccoli)
Large Mixed Pot • \$25
Ornamental Kale & Pansies
Wheat Straw • \$5 Corn Stalk Bundles • \$6

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL GREENHOUSE IS LOCATED BEHIND THE NEW CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL. USE ENTRANCE AT GATE 3.

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As in the past, the best method for obtaining an office appointment will be through your primary care physician. The office telephone numbers will remain the same.
I look forward to seeing you at my new location.
Sincerely,
Bruce A. Marshall, MD

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Contact Main Street Laurens at 984-2119 or www.mainstreetlaurens.org for more information

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