

# Midlands car chase ends at Laurens County line with 2 arrests

By John Clayton  
Editor

A car chase that began in Lee County ended around 11 p.m. on I-26 near the Laurens-Spartanburg county line with two arrests by the South Carolina Highway Patrol. Dakota W. Shasteen, 21, of Irwin, Tenn., was taken into custody on a half-dozen traffic-related charges after leading police on a chase through Kershaw County that eventually led police up I-26 through Newberry and Laurens counties. He was taken to the Johnson Detention Center in Laurens.

Newberry County. The Newberry County Sheriff's Office charged Brandt with possession of drug paraphernalia and littering after she threw items from the car during the chase in Newberry County. Her bond on the two charges was set at \$877.50.

Lee County officials could not be reached for comment as to why the pursuit began but Shasteen has a criminal history in Tennessee and is reportedly wanted in that state on separate

charges. South Carolina Highway Patrol Cpl. Bill Rhyne said troopers took over the pursuit of the vehicle and used a "precision immobilization technique" to bring the chase to an end soon thereafter.

Shasteen is charged in Laurens County with DUI, failure to stop for a blue light, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, failure to register a vehicle, improper display of a tag and driving without a license.



Dakota W. Shasteen



Rayanna M. Brandt



**TEAM OF THE YEAR** — Hey Good Buddy Competition Barbecue Team, LLC of Laurens, was awarded the AI Werts 2018 Tournament Points Champion Team of the Year trophy during the annual Southern BBQ Network (SBN) General Membership Meeting held in Summerville on Saturday, Jan. 19. SBN is dedicated to providing well trained judges to barbecue contests that are raising money for a charitable cause. In 2018 Hey Good Buddy was awarded three Grand Championships and two Reserve Grand championships having competed in contest all over the state. Pictured are Pittmaster Bryan C. Able, team members, Toni Able and Annette Elwood, and pittmaster Homer Elwood.

## 3 exhibits opening Feb. 8 at The Museum in Greenwood

On Thursday, Feb. 8, three new exhibits will open at The Museum in Greenwood with a reception from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

In observance of Black History month, The Ties That Bind — Service for a Lifetime celebrates the contributions of four sororities and five fraternities ("The Divine Nine") that have played an important role in African American history and culture locally, nationally, and worldwide.

A second exhibit, I'm Not Every Woman, I'm a Phenomenal Woman, is the 12th installment of an annual juried, traveling exhibition that offers African American fiber artists a showcase to exhibit their original and innovative designs around a changing theme each year. This year's theme pays tribute to an extraordinary African American woman — past or present, real or fictional, a public figure or an unsung heroine.

The Art of Quilting showcases the exquisite creations of Greenwood residents whose stitches lovingly created unique works of art.

The Fiber Arts exhibit will be on display through March 30, and the Ties That Bind and Art of Quilting exhibits will be on display through May 18. The Museum is located at 106 Main Street, next door to the Greenwood Community Theatre, and admission is free. For more information, contact The Museum at 864-229-7093.

## UCBI announces 4th quarter results

United Community Banks Inc. announced its fourth quarter financial results, which reflected solid year-over-year loan and deposit growth, improving operating efficiency and continued strong asset quality.

For the quarter, diluted earnings per share was \$0.56 compared with a net loss of \$0.16 per diluted share a year ago due to the impact of tax reform. Operating diluted earnings per share, which exclude merger-related and other charges, was \$0.57, an increase of 36 percent over the previous year.

Profitability ratios continued to be strong. United ended the year with a 1.43 percent return on assets and a 12.08 percent return on common equity. On an operating basis, return on assets was 1.45 percent and return on tangible common equity was 15.88%.

Other key banking metrics were strong. The fourth quarter saw con-

tinued net interest margin expansion and 8 percent annualized loan growth, the strongest growth quarter in 2018. Deposit growth reflected the strength of United's community banking franchise. Total customer deposits increased \$173 million for the fourth quarter and \$414 million for the year. Mortgage production grew by nearly 4% compared to the fourth quarter last year and increased 20 percent for the full year compared to 2017. United's SBA business also had a strong year, with production up 12 percent over 2017.

"The fourth quarter was a strong finish to an outstanding year," said Lynn Harton, Chief Executive Officer. "Our full year return on assets was up 31 basis points on an operating basis and our operating earnings per share was up 31 percent over 2017. These impressive results do not come easily and are attributed to the hard work of our

bankers, who continue to deliver the best service in the business. We are very pleased that their efforts are being recognized. Forbes included United on their list of the top 100 Best Banks in America for the fifth consecutive year. Additionally, for the fifth straight year, we earned the top ranking for overall customer satisfaction by JD Power; our service was ranked as highest in the Southeast. We were also honored by our recognition in the 'Best Banks to Work For' program by American Banker for the second year in a row. This is a measure of employee satisfaction for all banks in the country, and we could not be more pleased by our team's show of support for United. The strength of our culture and the strong momentum we see in the business gives me confidence that we will continue our strong performance into 2019 and continue to build long-term shareholder value."

## LCMH limits visitors due to spike in new flu cases

Due to a significant increase in flu activity, individuals 18 years of age or younger are asked not to visit with patients in any Prisma Health-Upstate facility, including Laurens County Memorial Hospital.

There have been more than 500 new positive cases and 23 new hospitalizations in the Prisma upstate facilities, and due to the widespread nature of the flu, visitors of any age showing signs and symptoms of flu-like illness should also refrain from visiting patients.

Some of the flu cases this year have not included a fever, so positive tests were more difficult to determine. Flu-like illness can include any combination of the symptoms, possibly including

fever, runny nose, congestion, cough and sore throat.

The public is urged to get their flu shots if they have not already done so and to use proper respiratory etiquette at all times by covering their coughs or sneezes or coughing into the crook of their elbow.

It's also imperative to clean your hands often throughout the day.

## Reward offered after horse shot in Clinton

By John Clayton  
Editor

The owners of a horse that was shot multiple times with a small-caliber firearm on Highway 56 in Clinton are offering a cash reward in the hopes of finding the person or persons who shot the animal.

The owners are offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the shooting.

The 24-year-old American Quarter Horse will survive the incident and is expected to make a full recovery, according to a release from the Laurens County Sheriff's Office.

Michael Strickland, whose mother, Charlotte Strickland, owns the horse as part of a family-operated business, said he was disturbed by the

shooting. "It's just infuriating to see somebody do something like this to an animal," he said. "We wanted to put the reward out to help catch who did it and prevent it from happening again."

Strickland said the injured horse is one of around a dozen on the property, noting that the person who shot it had to come deep onto the property to target the animal.

"This is such a disturbing case," said Laurens County Sheriff Don Reynolds. "This kind of assault is from an individual who I feel is also capable of assaulting and abusing and or abusing any person of any age. We are asking the public for their help in identifying the person responsible for such a horrendous act of violence upon an animal."

Anyone with information

on the incident is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 864-684-CRIME or contact the LCSO at 864-984-4967. All tips made to Crime Stoppers are anonymous.

## Obituary

### Louise R. Stroud

Louise Robinson Stroud, 94, of Laurens, and wife of the late C. Hubert Stroud, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 17, 2019, at NHC of Laurens.

Born in Greenville County she was the daughter of the late Golden Robinson and Alice Butler Robinson Landreth.

She was a member of Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church for 50 years.

Surviving is her son, Michael Stroud and wife, Charlene, granddaughter, Temple Horger and husband Jeff, and great-granddaughter; Alli Horger, all of Laurens.

Graveside services were held Jan. 20, at Cannon Memorial Park conducted by the Rev. Alex D. Henderson.

Memorials may be made to Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church Renew Fund, 499 Chestnut Ridge Road, Laurens, SC 29360.

Condolences may be expressed to the family at www.thekennedymortuary.com.

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