

PGA Tour unveils 36-event schedule with significant changes, 1B

Weather icon and forecast: 14A

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The Beaufort Gazette

Lightning storm fire claims lives of couple, cat

BY LAURA FINALDI lfinaldi@islandpacket.com

Two people and one cat died on Tuesday after a fire broke out at their Bluffton home during a storm. Mirjana Dizdarevic, 71, and Dzevad Dizdarevic, 73, died Tuesday from smoke inhalation after a fire broke out at their home at 332 Cold Creek Pass, the Beaufort County Coroner’s Office said Wednesday. Mirjana Dizdarevic

died on scene at approximately 5:02 p.m., and Dzevad Dizdarevic died at 5:51 p.m. at Coastal Carolina Medical Center, the coroner’s office said. The fire broke out at the home in Bluffton’s Edgefield community during a lightning storm. The coroner’s office, Dominion Electric, Bluffton Township Fire District, and the Beaufort County Sheriff’s Office were on scene after the fire at about 6 p.m. Tuesday. Two second-floor windows ap-

peared to have been shattered. An air conditioning unit lay on the roof beneath one of the windows. A few pots and outdoor lights in the front yard had tipped over. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division is the investigating agency, the coroner’s office said. Seven pets were inside the home when the fire began, according to Bluffton Township Fire District.

SEE LIGHTNING, 6A

Atlantic disturbance may become tropical storm Dolly

BY NICOLE BLEVINS nicole.blevins@thesunnews.com

Despite August showing increasing activity in the tropical Atlantic, only one, short-lived tropical storm has formed so far this month. A new disturbance churning in the Atlantic could develop into a tropical storm. If it does form, it will be named Dolly. The storm’s name is a striking coincidence after country singer and philanthropist Dolly Parton died Tuesday, but the 2026 storm names were announced before hurricane season began. The Atlantic coast, including Beaufort County, has been spared from tropical impacts so far this season. Largely because of a strong El Niño continuing to develop and producing vertical wind shear, disturbances in the Atlantic have mostly fallen apart before reaching the coast. But hurricane season is far from over, and activity in the Atlantic is likely to pick up as we near September and October. Beaufort County is likely to head into the weekend with daily chances of showers and potential for severe storms and heavy rainfall, but they are not associated with tropical activity.

SEE STORM, 5A

Bluffton woman sent scammers \$25K before bank intervened

BY KARL PUCKETT kapuckett@islandpacket.com

BEAUFORT Scammers tricked a Beaufort woman into sending them almost \$25,000, claiming to be law enforcement officers who could have her arrested if she did not comply with their requests. In the end, the woman, still on the line with the electronic fraudsters, passed a written note to a teller alerting her bank to the fraud as it was happening. Claiming to be a law enforcement officer is a common tactic of fraudsters, who tell victims they missed jury duty and could be arrested if they don’t pay a fine. Some may have access to residents’ personal information, using the details to seem more convincing. In the recent case, the Bluffton woman contacted the Beaufort County Sheriff’s Office Wednesday in regard to a fraud, according to a report. She told a deputy that she received a call about missing a jury appearance from an individual who claimed to be with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff’s Office. She spoke with three people during the conversation. They had personal information and sent documents. This led the woman to believe they were legitimate law enforcement officers, the report says. She was told she needed to send \$25,000, or she would be arrested and

SEE SCAMMERS, 7A



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The fenced-off portion of Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park because of structural issues is pictured in this drone photo on July 10, 2025.

Beaufort promenade repair could cost up to \$80M

BY KARL PUCKETT kapuckett@islandpacket.com

BEAUFORT Cost estimates to replace the promenade in Beaufort, which is considered the city’s “crown jewel,” range between \$60 million and \$80 million. The imposing price tag looms over every project in the city these days. On Tuesday, for example, City Coun-

cil members reluctantly said they would not commit \$1.5 million over three years to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a three-year \$3 million storm-resilience study. That project could have led to recommendations for new coastal protection systems in the Mossy Oaks and Pigeon Point neighborhoods and along Boundary Street, and more federal funding for construction. But Mayor Phil Cromer said the city can’t spare funds like that in light of the

promenade. “The timing is terrible,” Cromer said. The city continues to move ahead on the project despite the financial challenges. CITY CONSIDERS PROPOSALS In July, the city advertised a request for proposals from a multidisciplinary consulting team to assist the city in pre-

SEE PROMENADE, 5A

Marine sergeant dies in Beaufort County car crash

BY LAURA FINALDI lfinaldi@islandpacket.com

The 28-year-old man who died at the scene of a car crash in Beaufort County Saturday night was an active Sergeant in the Marines and member of the Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department, the Marines confirmed Tuesday. Raul Pacheco, 28, who died from multiple blunt force injuries following a car crash at 9:34 p.m. Saturday, was an active Marine who recently joined the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program at the fire department, Major Joe Leitner, a spokesman for the 2nd Marine Aircraft

Wing, confirmed to the Beaufort Gazette and Island Packet Tuesday. SkillBridge is a workforce development program pairing active duty service members with on-the-job training. AN OPPORTUNITY WITH BEAUFORT/PORT ROYAL FIRE DEPARTMENT Less than three weeks ago, the Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department made a Facebook post welcoming Pacheco to the fire department “as he transitions out of the United States Marine Corps.” “This opportunity allows him to continue learning, growing and developing his skills while working alongside the ded-

icated professionals at the Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department,” the Aug. 12 post reads. “His goal is to become the best fire service professional he can be, and is grateful for the opportunity to gain valuable experience from our organization.” A native of Florida, Pacheco served in the United States Marine Corps in Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, according to the fire department’s Facebook post. He, his wife and son “have decided to make Beaufort County their home,” the post read. Ross Vezin, a spokesman for the fire

SEE MARINE, 3A



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