

Berkeley County's first Miracle League Field planned



Rendering of Home Telecom, Miracle League Field. The field, which allows individuals of all abilities to play baseball, is expected to be ready for play in the fall of 2022.

BY MATT BISE
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Moncks Corner will be home to Berkeley County's first Miracle League Field within the next year, officials hope.

On Oct. 19, Home Telecom gave the town \$250,000 to aid with the building of the \$1.5 million field, which will allow individuals of various abilities to play baseball on turf especially designed to accommodate them. The donation adds to the \$700,000 the town has so far for the project.

The mission of Miracle League is to help communities build facilities that will remove barriers and aid those with physical and mental disabilities in playing sports. Since 2000, the organization has expanded into communities in six states and Canada.

Miracle League teams play baseball on a custom-designed, rubberized turf field that allows for wheelchairs and other devices to ensure injury free play. The design and construction of the facilities is obviously not that of a typical field but, once completed, the game experience for the players will be just as enriching.

"It's about serving the community and realizing that we can help others, and not everybody has that desire to play and that goal to feel that teamwork and perseverance and to be a part of something," said Becky Ellison, recreation director for the town of Moncks Corner.

Home Telecom is an internet and cable provider that serves close to 40,000 residents in Berkeley County.

"It's been since before 2014 since I was exposed to Miracle League," said Wil-

liam Helmly, president and CEO of Home Telecom. "I always thought it would be a good investment for the community and a good fit for what we do, and it has blossomed over time. The company has prospered from the citizens here in Berkeley County, so we wanted to give a little back."

The Moncks Corner project was first pitched back in 2018. Those putting together the plan decided the best place for the field would be at the town's regional recreation complex on East Main Street.

"This is such a need for those with exceptionalities," said Ellison. "We have over 30,000 children and adults (with disabilities) in Berkeley County alone. Although the field is in the town of Moncks Corner, it's going to service all

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Revitalization, growth a focus for Moncks Corner council hopefuls

BY MATT BISE and ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON

Three incumbents and four new candidates are vying for three open seats on the Moncks Corner Town Council in the Nov. 2 election.

The crop of candidates includes some Moncks Corner natives, but all said that they have seen the area grow in recent years and that they wish to help it continue to thrive. Their focuses varied from deregulation of business to emphasizing quality of life issues and revitalization efforts.

Because Moncks Corner has non-partisan elections, there are no districts, so candidates do not have specific challengers to run against head-to-head. The three candidates with the highest number of votes will take the open seats.

The polling place for the election will be Moncks Corner Town Hall, 118 Carolina Drive, according to election information available on the town's website. Anyone wishing to learn more about the election can go to www.monckscorner.gov/Data/Sites/1/media/documents/administration/moncks-corner-election-notice-2021.pdf.



Charlotte Cruppenink

Cruppenink

Councilwoman Charlotte Cruppenink was first elected to town council in 2014 and is looking for a third term.

She moved to Moncks Corner in 1994 with her husband. Cruppenink is also a veteran who served six years in the Marine Corps.

"I have always been the person who wanted to serve or had a desire to serve," said Cruppenink. "You can throw stones all day and complain, but to be part of the solution, that's not so easily achieved, and if you're given the opportunity to be of service in such a regard, I feel like you should seize that opportunity."

Cruppenink said she wants to continue to represent the town on the council to help preserve the area's way of life. She believes she has the opportunity to work with the mayor, town administrator and other council members.

Thus far in her time on the council, she said she is proud of the beautification and other revitalization efforts around Moncks Corner.

"The one thing that is most visible to everyone is the look (of) our town," she said. "The overall aesthetic look of the

Please see **COUNCIL**, A3



ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON/STAFF

Summerville High School teachers Andrea Rast, Deborah Somerville, Jennifer Plane and Amy Litz are all breast cancer survivors. They urge women to stay up to date on their mammograms and to be vigilant about self checks.

Local teachers support each other through battles with breast cancer

BY ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON
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They'll welcome you in their club, but they don't want to.

That's the unofficial motto of a group formed by four breast cancer survivors who teach at Summerville High School.

Each woman was diagnosed at different times, leading them to lean on each other and learn from each other as they walked through their own journeys together.

"It feels so wonderful to come to school and know that there's someone in the building who knows what you went through," said

English teacher Deborah Somerville. "We just latched on from one to another. We used one person's experience to help another person's experience to help navigate through the whole process."

One person's experience became advice for another. On many occasions, teacher Andrea Rast said, they would just meet up to ask what was normal to experience.

"She (teacher Amy Litz) would come to my house and sit with my family and we would have question and answer," Rast said.

Whether it was a phone call or a homemade meal, each teacher found ways to support each other as they were diagnosed.

An unexpected diagnosis

Jennifer Plane, a literature teacher at the high school, was the first of the group to be diagnosed.

"I went into the doctors thinking I had a sinus infection and there was just an area on my breast that sort of looked like hickey," she said.

The doctor sent her to get checked out by a specialist the next day. Later, she found out she had both skin cancer and breast cancer.

Plane was diagnosed in 2012 as the school year was coming to a close, so by the time

Please see **CANCER**, A3

SMC hosts first annual bariatric triathlon

BY ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON
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Summerville Medical Center hosted its first annual Splash-n-Dash bariatric triathlon on Oct. 17.

This year is the medical center's 10th year since starting the bariatric weight-loss program. For many, completing the recent triathlon was something they never thought would be a possibility again.

"For decades, I mean more than 30 years, I couldn't have even considered doing what I did this weekend," said

Dennis Wells, who participated in the triathlon.

Wells first started his weight loss journey in November of 2019. He had grown up playing sports and was an athlete for a large portion of his life. Now in his 60s, Wells said his motivation to get involved with the program was to be able to do more of the things he loves to do with his family.

"The biggest motivator for me was probably my grandkids," Wells said. "I was not able to get down on the floor and play with them at Christmas and birthday parties or anything like that. I really

enjoy doing that kind of stuff now."

Back in 2019, Wells said he typically walked around 3,000 steps a day. Now he averages just under 10,000 steps a day. At the triathlon, Wells completed the entire race with newfound confidence.

"It's definitely something that has

Please see **SMC**, A3



PROVIDED

Married couple Warren and Tiffany Crusenberry took first and second place at the first annual Splash-n-Dash triathlon.



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