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Coastal Carolina Fair returns to the Lowcountry

BY ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON
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For the first time since 2019, the Coastal Carolina Fair took over the Exchange Park in Ladson.

From farm animals to fried foods, the buzz of all things fair-related returned in full swing for residents of Berkeley, Dorchester and Charleston counties from Oct. 28 through Nov. 7. Typically held every fall, the fair is put on by the Exchange Club of Charleston and helps raise funds for the club's community grant service program.

During the hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gary Leonard, the fair's chairman of media and press relations, said staff at the fair took advantage of the time by making some capi-

tal improvements and addressing some of the property's physical needs.

"It allowed us during that time to really put more time and energy back into updating our facilities and to be as ready as much as we could be with not knowing what the health conditions would be," Leonard said.

Bringing the fair back may have an impact on the greater Summerville area's economic growth too. Although the town has never looked specifically at the financial effects of the fair, town economic development manager Michael Lisle said that any big events in the area seem to attract more visitors to check out Summerville.

"You have to believe that there is a spill over effect from the fair of people who are coming into the fair who are then

coming into Summerville to shop or dine, but we have never actually tried to measure or put a number to it," Lisle said. "We also know that any time there is an event, whether it's the fair or the Flowertown Festival, it's a great opportunity for the town to show itself off to people."

Vendors and volunteers

The months leading up to the 2021 fair brought a unique set of uncertainties, Leonard said.

"With so many things going on because of COVID restrictions, some vendors weren't sure if they would be able to come," he said. "It was one of those things where we had to wait and see."

Leonard said one of the issues that concerned some vendors was the difficulty in finding employees to hire, similar to many industries nationwide.

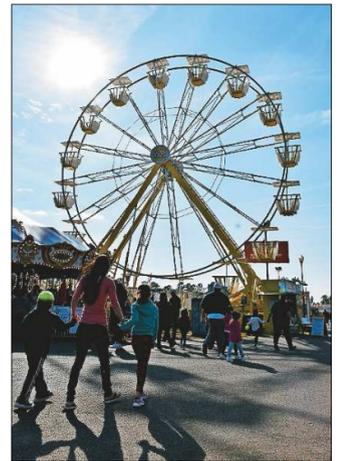
"Also food supply costs, such as meat and stuff like that, went up," Leonard said.

As the fair's opening date drew closer, many of the details began to come together, Leonard said. This year, the fair

Please see **FAIR**, A3

ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON/STAFF

The 2021 Coastal Carolina Fair took place from Oct. 28 and lasted until Nov. 7, but fair spokesperson Gary Leonard said volunteers geared up to organize the fair long before those official days.



FILE/MATT BIASE

The Red Cross said cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires, and year after year Thanksgiving is the peak day for these tragedies.

Officials urge caution during home fire season

BY MATT BIASE
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It's beginning to be a busy time of year for local Red Cross volunteers trained to aid those whose homes are damaged by fires. In a recent two-week span, volunteers were dispatched to six damaged homes in Berkeley and Dorchester counties alone.

The combination of using alternative sources of heat to deal with the colder temperatures and a bustling kitchen during the holiday season means the winter months is the season for homes fires. Thanksgiving is one of the busiest days for fire departments.

"Every day, people's lives are devastated by home fires — a threat that's increasing as winter approaches," said Rod Tolbert, chief executive officer of the Red Cross of South Carolina.

Many home fires begin when someone leaves a pot on too long in the kitchen or when a deep fryer is improperly used to heat the garage. Other times, as the weather becomes colder, those without working HVAC units turn to alternative forms of heat.

"The number one thing is people just trying to stay warm, and sometimes they may not have a working heating unit and they will do anything to stay warm," said Lt. Colt Roy, public information officer with the Whitesville Fire Department in Berkeley County. "Sometimes it's misuse of items It could be a store bought heater that's close to something like curtains or blankets. Or it could be a gas stove with an open flame."

Fires can break out in any home, but Roy added they're especially

Please see **FIRE**, A3



MATT BIASE/STAFF

Post 166 Commander Dean Nimocks tends to the site bearing the memorial of an unknown Marine in front of the American Legion in Goose Creek on Oct. 3.

Story of unknown Marine interred in Goose Creek still resonates 10 years later

BY MATT BIASE
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The identity of the Marine's remains was never discovered.

The memorial stone, sitting under a concrete mold of boots and a helmet resting on the butt of the rifle, reads: "Unknown United States Marine at peace — Semper Paratus."

The ashes were buried in front of American Legion Post 166 off Howe Hall Road in Goose Creek on Nov. 11, 2011. The remains of the unknown service member made it to that spot following a bizarre turn of

events that included a storage facility and a haggling session at the flea market.

Post 166 Commander Dean Nimocks retired after spending more than 20 years in the Navy. He is obviously proud of the memorial and honored to be a part of the upkeep of the burial site. And he enjoys telling the story to anyone who will listen about how those remains made it to this final resting place.

"This one was a rectangular urn, you know it's not like one you see at the funeral homes, like the round ones," Nimocks said. "This was a square one with the Marine emblem on it."

It first was brought to Nimocks' and the American

Legion's attention after a browsing shopper spotted it at a flea market and recognized that it may be of some importance.

Nimocks said he was "flabbergasted" that anyone had tried to sell the urn.

"A lady walked in here one day with an urn, with a Marine emblem on it — no other information," he said. "A guy was trying to sell it at the flea market. He got it in a storage locker and never bothered to try and trace it from the storage locker back to the family."

Please see **MARINE**, A3

Local nonprofit aids disabled during pandemic



PROVIDED/

From left to right, Lindsey Daniel stands with Katelyn Mitchell, who is a resident in one of the organization's community-based homes. Currently, Mitchell is employed as an administrative assistant with Community Options.

BY ABIGAIL HUTCHINSON
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For more than 20 years, Lindsey Daniel has been an advocate and supporter for people with disabilities statewide, and throughout the pandemic, this role has only grown to hold more gravity.

Now, Daniel has been appointed the new state director of South Carolina for Community Options, a national nonprofit that supports people with disabilities. In her new role, Daniel has begun overseeing the organization's residential, employment and day habilitation services throughout South Carolina.

Daniel has been with Community Options since 2007. She has held a variety of roles throughout her time, all

of which aid the organization's mission to provide housing and employment opportunities for those with disabilities.

In Summerville, the organization offers social recreational services, independent living skills, residential services and community integration.

As many businesses have struggled to find significant staff numbers throughout the pandemic, Daniel says that she and her co-workers have worked diligently to set up job opportunities for individuals involved in the organization. The ongoing pandemic has been a mixture of bringing more barriers to supporting their nearly 300 community members while also

Please see **DISABILITIES**, A3

