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Officials investigate two Jeff Davis Parish shootings

By Doris Maricle
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Edwards

Authorities are investigating two separate overnight shootings that left one man dead, another man injured in Jennings and a 16-year-old facing an attempted murder charge in Welsh.

Dwight Breaux, 42, of Welsh was fatally shot inside a car at 1210 West Street in Jennings around 9 p.m. Wednesday during what police believe was a

drug deal. A second male victim, who police have not publicly identified, was also injured. The victim was listed in stable condition

Thursday morning at an area trauma center, according to Police Chief Danny Semmes.

A three-year-old child in the backseat of the vehicle was not injured. Semmes said a

projectile hit the back glass of the vehicle, narrowly missing striking the child.

Steven John Edwards, 41, of Jennings was arrested for first-degree murder, two counts of attempted first-degree murder and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon in connection with the shooting.

Police were dispatched to the area of West Street after a distraught female called 911 around 9 p.m. Wednesday, Semmes said. At the same time,

911 received a panic alarm from Jennings American Legion Hospital. When the dispatcher contacted the hospital, she was advised that they had two gunshot victims at the hospital and one was in critical condition.

Officers were dispatched to 1210 West Street and quickly determined the two calls were related, Semmes said.

Officers arrested Edwards at a residence after he was identified as the shooter by witnesses and one of the victims.

A handgun and several bullet casings were recovered at the scene, Semmes said.

Additional arrests and charges are pending further investigation, Semmes said.

In an unrelated incident, a 16-year-old Welsh man is facing an attempted second-degree murder charge after shooting at another man inside a vehicle during an altercation at the Pecan Acres Trailer Park off La. 99 in Welsh. The victim was not injured, according to Police

Chief Marcus Crochet.

Crochet said officers were dispatched to the trailer park in reference to a shooting. When officers arrived they learned the 16-year-old had shot at another man inside a vehicle, but no one was injured, he said.

The 16-year-old was later arrested on an attempted second-degree murder charge and transported to a juvenile facility. The incident remains under investigation, Crochet said.

WOMEN'S FALL CONFERENCE

Turning fear into faith

Kyle shares story with local 'strong women'

By Lindsay Halpin
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An air of inspiration greeted attendees as they walked into the Lake Charles Civic Center on Thursday to take part in the 29th annual Women's Fall Conference hosted by the Women's Commission of Southwest Louisiana.

Attendees spent their morning hours leisurely perusing four floors of marketplace wares or sitting in on



Tara Kyle

As the lunch hour approached, anticipation was at a fever pitch to listen to keynote speaker Taya Kyle.

Kyle, widow of former U.S. Navy SEAL Chris Kyle and founder of the Chris Kyle Frog Foundation — whose mission it is to "restore military and first responder communities by keeping families together" — began her remarks by stating she never gives the same talk twice as she travels the country spreading her messages of patriotism, faith, family and hope.

"I love, love, love being in this room of strong women and men who are here to support them," Kyle said. "I think it's the coolest thing. Women have a big job in this world and it's cool to see you rise to the occasion, figuring out how to be inspired and give back. You're my people and I love

See **WOMEN**, A3

'Don't Be a Monster'



Rick Hickman / American Press

October is Bullying Prevention Month. The Calcasieu Parish School Board is partnering with The Lost Hollows Haunted Trail to bring this message to students — like the ones at S.J. Welsh Middle School (shown above and below). The "Don't Be a Monster" presentations will focus on cyberbullying and what it means to be an upstander instead of a bystander. The presentation includes characters from the Haunted Trail in full costume and encourages all students to be a part of the solution to bullying.



LC man charged in woman's death

Staff report

A Lake Charles man is in jail for the death of a 38-year-old woman.

Lake Charles Police investigated an early morning domestic disturbance Tuesday, Oct. 15.

Police responded around 12:08 a.m. to the 1900 block of Tousand Road.

"Upon arrival and during the course of the investigation, it was learned that Robbie Gayle Vital, 38, of



Humphrey

the LCPD.

Jewel Humphrey, 30, was placed under arrest and charged with attempted second-degree murder.

Vital succumbed to her injuries Wednesday, Oct. 16, in

a local hospital. The charges against Humphrey were upgraded to second-degree murder and domestic abuse child endangerment. Judge Guy Bradberry issued a bond of \$1.45 million.

Officer Joshua Ewing is the initial reporting officer. Evidence Officer Jessica Single processed the scene. Detective Colby Thompson is the lead investigator.

The Lake Charles Police Department has investigated 11 homicides in 2019.

Results remain the same

Official recount uphold Oct. 12 election results

Calcasieu: Police jury seat

By John Guidroz
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A recount of the results from the District 3 Calcasieu Parish Police Jury race did not change the outcome, with Eddie Earl Lewis defeating incumbent Shelly Mayo.

Calcasieu Clerk of Court Lynn Jones confirmed the results on Thursday. Lewis defeated Mayo by 31 votes in the Oct. 12 primary election.

The recount, formally requested by Mayo, only included early vote/absentee ballots that were either mailed in

or faxed, along with military online ballots, Jones said.

"That's the only part of the process that has hands on it," he said. "That's all that was counted because everything else was done on machines."

The original election night tally for those ballots was 35 votes for Mayo and 28 votes for Lewis. After the recount, that was changed to 32 for Mayo and 26 for Lewis.

Jones said the updated numbers were because of "undervotes," or ballots where

See **CALCASIEU**, A3

Beauregard: Parish sheriff

By Pamela Sleezer
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An official recount of Beauregard Parish absentee and early votes has upheld the previous determination that a runoff election for sheriff will be between John L. Gott and Mark Herford, according to officials.

On Thursday, officials with the Secretary of State's office and the board of election supervisors presided over a public recount of early and absentee votes at the Beauregard Registrar of Voters office.

The recount showed a change in only four votes total, two less for candidate Jim Jacobsen, who had requested the recount, and two additional for Gott.

A recount of votes cast on Saturday at all 40 precincts showed no change in those numbers that were reported.

Jacobsen had filed for the recount Monday morning following Saturday's election after a noticeable delay in the reporting of absentee and early votes.

Saturday night, after that

day's votes had been reported, vote results showed Jacobsen in the lead. After the early and absentee votes were submitted, Jacobsen was shown to fall to third place and missed out on the runoff election set for November.

Jacobsen told the *American Press* that he was pleased with the results of the recounts, and that, most of all, he had sought clarification on the delay in reporting the absentee and early votes.

"I had no real expectation of a change in the outcome, but there were some abnormalities on election night that I felt deserved some explanation," Jacobsen stated.

Jacobsen said he maintained respect for the election process and was appreciative for the recount and efforts from all those involved.

While absentee and early votes are typically the first vote numbers reported after polling places close on election night, Beauregard Parish experienced a delay on Saturday night causing those numbers

See **VOTES**, A2

Jeff Davis Parish: Police Jury

By Doris Maricle
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JENNINGS — Incumbent District 11 Police Juror Butch Lafargue of Welsh will hold his seat on the Jeff Davis Parish Police Jury after a recount Thursday.

Official election results from Saturday's election shows Lafargue beat his challenger, Paul Trahan, by an extremely close margin of two votes.

The final tally showed Lafargue winning by 352 votes over Trahan's 350 votes.

OUTSIDE
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