

# THE ISLAND PACKET

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 2012

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**92°**  **75°**  
Doesn't look like we'll stay dry today either. **6B**

**FAA: Jets that flew too close in DC never on collision course 9A** 

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## MURDER CHARGE FILED

John Cross Sr., 90, allegedly killed his 84-year-old wife June 24

By **ALLISON STICE**  
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**W**hen 90-year-old John Cross Sr. appeared in court Thursday to face charges of murdering his 84-year-old wife, it's possible he heard almost nothing.

Cross, rolled into the Beaufort County Courthouse in a wheelchair, suffers from a litany of health problems, his attorney Ann Stirling told Judge Carmen Mullen at his bond hearing. Among them is partial deafness.

The bullet he fired into his head June 24 after allegedly slashing his wife Page to death remains lodged there. He must have a device implanted in his mouth to keep germs from going into his brain as a result of that wound. He can only stand for a short time and only then with the help of a walker. He has a dermatological condition. He is blind in one eye.

"I doubt he can hear what we're saying," Stirling told the judge.

Warrants on charges of murder and possession of a weapon in the commission of a violent crime were served at the courthouse just before the bond hearing.

When Cross learned of those charges Thursday morning, Stirling said he "fell apart." She said he misses his wife of 62 years. Cross did not speak during his bond hearing.

Please see **MURDER** on 7A



**John Cross Sr., 90, waits in a wheelchair Thursday at the start of his bond hearing in the Beaufort County Courthouse. Standing behind him is his son John Cross Jr.**

JAY KARR • Staff photo

## County schools' scores rising

Public school students across the district continued to improve on standardized tests.

By **RACHEL HEATON**  
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Beaufort County public school students continued to make gains on standardized tests this year, according to data released Thursday.

A new state grading system gives the school district a "B" overall, meaning it exceeded state expectations. All but four schools in the district were rated as meeting or exceeding expectations.

"An overall rating of a 'B' is absolutely awesome, especially since we were in corrective action just a few years ago," district superintendent Valerie Truesdale said. "It's pretty amazing."

The S.C. Department of Education released district scores Thursday on

Please see **GRADES** on 7A

**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

For more details on how the Beaufort County School District and its schools performed on state standardized tests, go to the following websites:

- **Federal accountability data:** <http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/>
- **Palmetto Assessment of State Standards data:** <http://ed.sc.gov/data/pass/>
- **High School Assessment Program data:** <http://ed.sc.gov/data/hsap/>



2012 SUMMER OLYMPICS: GYMNASTICS

## Douglas wins all-around title

The 14-year-old became the third straight U.S. athlete — and first African-American — to win gymnastics' top prize.

By **NANCY ARMOUR**  
The Associated Press

LONDON — Just 14, Gabby Douglas pleaded with her mother to let her move cross country, certain a new coach could help her get to the Olympics.

Not two years after setting out on her own, Douglas beat Russia's Viktoria Komova for the all-around title Thursday night, becoming the third straight U.S. athlete to win gymnastics' biggest prize and the first African-American to do so. It was her second gold medal of the London Games, coming two nights after she and her teammates gave the United States its first Olympic title since 1996.

"It feels amazing to be the Olympic champion," Douglas said. Puts her in a special category, too.



**U.S. gymnast Gabrielle Douglas**

Mary Lou Retton, Carly Patterson and Nastia Liukin are the only other Americans to win the Olympic all-around gold.

The Americans have been looking for their "next Mary Lou" since she won in 1984, and now they've got her in the 16-year-old Douglas.

Please see **OLYMPICS** on 7A

**MORE INSIDE**

- U.S. swimmer **Michael Phelps** won the men's 200 individual medley Thursday, his 16th Olympic gold and 20th medal overall. **1B**
- Ann Romney said Thursday that **Rafalca**, the horse she partially owns, "thrilled her to death" with a solid performance at her Olympic debut in dressage, an ancient equestrian sport. **7A**

## Woods Bridge struck by crane, closes for 2 hours

The Beaufort bridge was inspected by the S.C. Department of Transportation, but no major damage or injuries were reported.

By **PATRICK DONOHUE**  
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The familiar hum and rumble of traffic across the Richard V. Woods Memorial Bridge was noticeably absent Thursday afternoon in downtown Beaufort.

Beaufort police closed the swing bridge at about 1:30 p.m. after a crane mounted on a truck struck the upper part of the bridge's steel frame, Police Chief Matt Clancy said.

The truck, owned by the Beaufort County Department of Public Works, was traveling from Lady's Island toward Beaufort when the upper arm of the crane struck the bridge's metal supports, Clancy said.

The bridge reopened at about 3:30 p.m. — just in time for the afternoon rush hour — after an



**DELAYNA EARLEY • Staff photo**

**A county truck carrying a crane hit the structure of the Richard V. Woods Memorial Bridge just before 1 p.m. Thursday.**

inspector from the S.C. Department of Transportation declared it safe.

The inspector planned to monitor the bridge for any changes, authorities said.

Please see **BRIDGE** on 7A



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**INSIDE TODAY'S ISLAND PACKET**  
**In the wake of the Colorado theater shootings, Houston has created a video to teach residents what to do in the event of such an attack. 5A**

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
"When you come to a fork in the road, take it."  
Yogi Berra