Gunshot in Five Points hits student’s car

Colin Campbell
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No one was hit in the gunfire that erupted in a crowded downtown Five Points Sunday morning, but for one USC student, it meant a long night and a bullet in her car.

“I was walking outside in the beer bath at Barbers,” she said.

“All of a sudden, we hear this ‘pop-pop-pop-pop-pop.’ I looked at the girl I was working with, and we were like, ‘Was that gunfire?’ The bombers told us to back off.”

The third-year marketing student asked not to be identified because she’s nervous about what she thinks may have been gang violence and fears retaliation.

When they’d decided the coast was clear, the two stood up and looked across the street at the Rite Aid on Harden Street where the shots had come from — and where they’d both parked their cars. Police had descended upon the parking lot.

“All of a sudden I see them (police) taking my car with crime scene tape,” the student said. “One of the bombers walked over with me and I walked up to my car and saw bullet holes in the windshield.”

41 students removed, 3 arrested due to alcohol, wristband infractions during Saturday service

Colin Campbell & Caroline Bailey
CCAMPBELL@DAILYGAMECOCK.COM & CBAYTY@DAILYGAMECOCK.COM

As Connor Shaw refound his stride during Saturday’s 3:30 p.m. game against Missouri, with a gametime temperature forecast of 80 degrees, staff had passed out “Famously Hot” headbands.

Ticketing incidents, ejections decrease

In major contrast from last year’s infamous fraternity rush, which was suspended due to drug and alcohol violations, the 2012 fraternity rush has been described as “really good” and “problem-free.”

“We’re very, very happy,” said Jordan Cox, Fraternity Council president. “Not only have we easily improved from last year, but we’re improved from the spring. We wanted it to be perfect, but it couldn’t have been much worse than last year. It turned out great.”

Of the 86 men who registered to participate in recruitment, 368 received bids — a lower number than expected, according to the Director of Student Services Anna Edwards. This is a good sign according to Cox, who believes that this shows that — because of a dry rush — chapters actually interacted with those rushing and took the time to sort through men they did and did not want.

“I believe that our chapters are moving away from the mindset of ‘we have to take as many pledges as possible,’” Cox explained. “Now they are actually recruiting instead of being in a panic mindset. Active members and the guys rushing actually cared on good conversation and interacted with each other at the community service activities and the chapters could see which kids would fit best with their chapter.”

While many chapters may have been more selective, Cox said it is also possible that some men may have dropped out of recruitment because they were unable to drink and indulge in the party culture.

For the most part, though, the men and fraternities supported the changes.

“Fraternity recruitment makes strides from last year

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“Fraternity recruitment makes strides from last year
Before he was a bestselling author, Pat Conroy was a life-changing teacher for a group of students at the Mary Field School on Daufuskie Island off the Savannah, Ga., coast in 1969 and 1970. One of his students, on whom he based the character Ethel in his 1977 memoir “The Water Is Wide,” described the influence of Conroy as an educator and mentor to the sheltered children with a curiosity about the world outside their island. Sallie Ann Robinson delivered the message as the Witten Distinguished Lecturer Monday afternoon in the School of Law auditorium. Robinson, now a noted Gullah chef and cookbook author, recalled the day Conroy took over their seventh-grade classroom.

“We had no idea this man was gonna change our lives. He looked at the books we had — they were old, they were ratty — He wanted us to know what those pages we read were saying in our world,” Robinson said.

Robinson described a teacher who took on the responsibility of preparing these sixth- and seventh-graders for their island that, until that point, they had known nothing about. Lessons on the Great Lakes, classical music, space and the “magic” of science, trick-or-treating and a class trip to Washington, D.C. were among Robinson’s recollections of Conroy.

“The Water is Wide,” one of Conroy’s most well-known works, is his real life account of his life as a teacher working in a rundown school on a poorly funded island. Like in real life, Conroy’s students are almost all descendants of slaves who have had little or no exposure to the world beyond their island. “He was gentle, but he was also letting us know that we had to prepare ourselves,” Robinson’s lecture was preceded by the presentation of the Chester C. Travelstead Award for Courage in Education. Charles T. Ferillo Jr., the communications specialist for the University’s Center for Law and medicine, was honored for his contributions.

The program added to the University 101 textbook, “Transitions,” which the university’s first-year students will incorporate in-class and beyond the classroom experiences.

Other programs are also integrating USC Connect through online portfolio programs. Students studying in the performing arts, art education, library and information science will use online public health will use online portfolios to chronicle their experiences in and outside of the classroom.
Best of luck to OPPA students during the application and interview process! We're all cheering for you!

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CRIME © Cont. from 1

The garnet that sent the popular bar scene into a panic Sunday morning were fired around 1 a.m. after an alleged robbery, according to a report.

The alleged robbery victim claimed four men dressed in all black — two of whom he said had dreadlocks — knocked him to the ground and stole his wallet, which he said contained $55, before fleeing in a white or light-colored Ford truck, according to the report. Several witnesses saw the truck speeding away from the scene, the report said. Shortly afterward, the gunman was heard.

"It doesn't make complete sense," Columbia police spokeswoman Jennifer Timmons said when asked for more details on the sequence of events. She emphasized that "incident reports are not the Gospel" — they rely on witnesses at the scene and the initial findings of the responding officers.

According to another report, around the same time, another man and his friend told police they'd been walking past Thirsty Parrot's when the man was bashed into by two unknown men. One of the unknown men confronted the victim verbally, the report said. After the man turned his back to walk away, one of them punched him in the head, the report said.

At that point, eight unknown black men began assaulting the man, punching him several times in the face and body while he attempted to guard his face with his arms, according to a witness account in the report. The man's right forearm was broken and he was taken to a local hospital, according to the report.

A third incident was reported around 2 a.m., when a man was assaulted near Pop's NY Pizza. He claimed he was shoved up against a door and punched by seven to 10 men after an altercation, the report said. When he fell to the ground, one or two began to kick him in the chest and head, causing severe lacerations and swelling to his face, according to the report. He may have also suffered severe damage to his skull, the report said. Emergency medical services were called and took him to a local hospital.

Organizations in the area are considered a crime “hot spot” and is patrolled frequently by officers, “they can’t be at all places at all times,” Timmons said.

She said she’d need to compile statistical data to know for sure whether the weekend represented a spike in area crime, but she did acknowledge that the number of police reports she sent out Monday was unusual.

“We did have a lot of incidents in the Five Points area, you can’t hide from that fact,” Timmons said. “As to why they’re happening — I wish I could blame it on a full moon.”
It is difficult to overstate the value of $2.5 million to a college student.

Food Lion has a lot in common with the New York Stock exchange. Both are a means of exchange involving governance. The federal government would be one of many organizations. By the very nature of being on university holidays and exam periods. Opinions expressed in the annual sales of this website to be redistributed, a phrase that deserves more attention and regulation from the authorities. On top of the principles guiding the organization. On top of all the people. T oday, however, it has choked on a popsicle stick than USC Connect still deserves more attention and regulation from the authorities.

The election holds for our future. It is as simple as watching the news or doing some research online to get informed on issues that will determine our future. The candidates have different approaches as to how to manage these expenses. Political issues such as outsourcing jobs post-graduation. The candidates each hold contrasting views on several issues that will greatly determine our generation specifically, and the political future of jobs will be determined differently among all students. In the past few weeks this type of rhetoric helps divide the people, division is not the answer. This is a very common occurrence among college students who are misled by the idea of voting as a responsibility to the community and that there is no short visit to your local town hall to vote. In fact, the university even hands out forms to students so we are required to put forth even less effort. For out of state students who wish to vote as a member of the community an absentee form is available. This form allows voters to determine their political party and send in their vote to be counted among those of their state. This process does not cost people anything except a small portion of their time and the benefits from doing so are overwhelming.

As young adults, we are transitioning between being reliant on our parents and the working world. The candidates both campaigns had to deal with what the media defined as their true colors. The candidates both campaigns had to deal with what the media defined as their true colors.

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‘Balloon Man’ makes magic with colorful creations
Shawn Mewborn ditches corporate for family balloon-making business
Chele Gould
QUICKSTRIK@DAILYGAMECOCK.COM
Children stand at his feet, holding quasi-dipped tortilla chips and chip-filled cups of Coke. There’s a look of wide-eyed amazement — they’ve found magic in the Vista.

His plain black apron is packed with thousands of balloons — pink, green, yellow and red — each a few twists and turns away from a ladybug or an elaborate arching rainbow hat.

It all starts with one question: Do you have your listening ears on? He runs through a super-speed verbal list of every animal, alien or balloon accessory, from Spiderman to a pirate sword to a jumping dolphin.

He’s Shawn Mewborn, much better recognized by his moniker: The Balloon Man.

Balloon artistry is his full-time gig, operating with his wife Janice under the company title Balloonopolis. Every Monday from 6 to 8 p.m., he crafts balloons during Salsarita’s Kid’s Night in the Vista.

College students, 5-year-olds and their parents alike are struck with wonder. The latter creates balloon masterpieces to adorn large-scale events.

Mewborn has coined himself a "decoration." He does both, which he said isn’t a common feat in the business.

Balloon arches stretch across the Horseshoe for every commemorative Carolina affair — grand semi-circles covered with hundreds of color-coded balloons. It’s all Balloonopolis.

This year, the Mewborns made the Bid Day arches for Delta Delta Delta, Alpha Delta Pi, Gamma Phi Beta, Alpha Chi Omega and Delta Zeta sororities. Mewborn will also be awake at 3 a.m. this Saturday to decorate campus for Carolina Scholars Day.

Balloonopolis has made Gamma Phi Beta’s Bid Day arch for the past few years, but his business expanded to the other sororities this fall because of a worldwide shortage... of helium.

It’s not a joke. Mewborn can’t get helium. It’s just not in supply. Many sororities have made their own arches in the past, but without a helium pump to make wrist-sized frogs and giant alien headpieces.

Empty chairs are filled by yellow and green, yellow and red — each a few twists and turns away from a ladybug or an elaborate arching rainbow hat.

Nathan Leach / THE DAILY GAMECOCK

Balloon artist Shawn Mewborn draws eyebrows on one of his creations.

‘Bad news comes, don’t you worry even when it lands. Good news will work its way to all them plans.’ — Michel Musée

Nathan Leach

Mewborn crafts a balloon octopus at Salsarita’s in the Vista Monday night.

It’s a laughable line after seeing Mewborn at work. He has kids grabbing their stomachs in fits of laughter, nearly falling over from the infusion of nose-plugged voices and fun facts about elephants’ trunk tunes into the twisting and turning for every whim of their imagination.

But 12 years ago, Mewborn met this monstrous young man, making a “one-balloon dog” (a novice animal, according to Mewborn) with absolutely no personality. He was impressed with the lackluster artist, because Mewborn had never even attempted to make the most basic balloon animal.

On the car ride home from dinner, Jillian (the 2-year-old) bit Jenna’s (the 4-year-old) balloon elephant, and sheer disaster struck. It was the end of Jenna's world, but her dad was determined to make it all better.

The next-day, on lunch break from his corporate IT and data analysis job in Columbia, Mewborn ran to Cromer’s P-Nuts and bought a bag of balloons. He spent the hour learning how to make a dog, a sword and a replacement elephant, all from a how-to-book.

From there, a neighbor told a friend who told a friend, and Mewborn started part-time balloon artistry at weekend birthday parties. His pay was enough to fund the hobby, moving from a hand pump to a floor pump and traveling to balloon-making conventions across the country.

One of those conventions, in Dallas, was where the foundation of Balloonopolis was born.

It’s a unique art, the art of balloon making, and it’s divided into two spheres: twisting and entertaining, and balloon decorating. The first makes peppers and penguins for birthday parties, corporate functions and festivals. The latter creates balloon masterpieces to adorn large-scale events.

Mewborn crafts a balloon octopus at Salsarita’s in the Vista Monday night.

‘It’s not a career the school counselor is going to sandwich between business and biology. So how does one begin a life in the balloon business?’

Twelve years ago, Mewborn was at a restaurant with his two daughters, Jillian and Jenna (2- and 4-year-olds at the time). A balloon artist came at the table with one line: “Want a balloon?”

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Mewborn crafts a balloon octopus at Salsarita’s in the Vista Monday night.
He found love in a balloon-making place. Mewborn met his wife, Janice, at a balloon-making convention when the two just started out in their careers. He had been in the balloon game for about four years, and Janice, from Denver, had been crafting for just as long.

Now, what’s a balloon-making convention? Mewborn describes it as “1,000 crazy people who play with balloons for a living taking over a hotel and getting very little sleep.” There are instructional classes, competitions and a “jam room” where, 24 hours a day, all attendees can catch up with balloon-making friends and share tricks of the trade.

The balloon-making community is international, Mewborn said. He cites his marriage to Janice as living proof of the power of the hobby.

His smile is wide, and the joy he gets from his job is clear as he runs through his history, as living proof of the power of the hobby. “I have the best job in the world,” Mewborn said. “I get to put smiles on people’s faces; I get to go to parties all the time; I get to make people happy.”

To reach the Balloon Man and Balloonopolis, visit www.balloonopolis.com. All rates are based on party size, type and difference and can be negotiated through Shawn Mewborn.
PHD • JORGE CHAM

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First-year graduate student Chelsea France was born in South Carolina, but once she moved over, she took a long-time back.

France was raised in Dublin, Ohio, and competed on the cross country team at the University of Virginia before deciding to become a Gamecock. Her younger sister is already a student at USC, as her father also attended graduate school at the university.

A redshirt due to injury in her freshman year, France has one final year of eligibility, but she has used it to become one of USC's top runners, finishing in the top six in both the Gamescocks' 11th and 13th at the Commodore Classic over the past two weekends. USC finished seventh overall at the Gamescocks' second SEC title.

Unsurpassed with that result, France said she looks forward to improving her performance when the Gamescocks and 11th overall at the Commodore Classic. She is entering her 15th year as a competitor at the national level. "I was OK at Vanderbilt," France said. "I can't say that I was extremely excited about it," France said. "But this coming weekend, I'm hoping to really show what I've been working so hard for, and hopefully this weekend will be a better result than I've just had now."

"The whole point is just to constantly improve. I don't want to peak out so early in the season. Regionals are definitely a focus of mine, because I definitely want to make it to nationals. I'm just going to continue progressing and build off of the Vanderbilt meet."

The Gamescocks' top runner, freshman Kylia Lamp, finished second overall at the Commodore Classic, turning in a personal record time of 21:06.24 for a 4k. France said she and Lamp have already developed a close friendship. "Kylia and I are lucky enough to be training together every day, so it's nice being able to have that person to push me on days when I'm not feeling good. I can push her on days when she's not feeling so great," France said. "It's a very much a collaborative relationship, and I definitely feel like we've established a friendship in the short time that I've been here."

Lampe and France finished first and second in the Commodore Classic, USC's first competition of the season. That course was a 5k, but the rest of the team's races this year will take place on 6k courses. France said she is not too worried about it.

"I feel like it's such a different race," France said. "It's all about placing well and being able to go through the 1K and push yourself through the last 1K, but just being able to go where you are within yourself and push yourself as much as you can, so as long as we're not looking too much at time as you are at placing well."

France said she and her teammates are just adjusting to South Carolina, a university she always had in the back of her mind as a place she would like to attend.

"It's been a very smooth coming to USC," France said. "The team atmosphere is wonderful. I feel like a lot of people are just a lot of fun to be around, and I've really enjoyed it."

France said she has no trouble making the transition. "I've really enjoyed my first two meets here at USC so far. It's been a lot of fun to be a part of a lot of work to do. But I'm really excited about the season, the way this is going."

Senior Sunner native shines as leader for cross country team

Paula Berkovich

First-year graduate student Chelsea France was born in South Carolina, but once she moved over, she took a long-time back.

France was raised in Dublin, Ohio, and competed on the cross country team at the University of Virginia before deciding to become a Gamecock. Her younger sister is already a student at USC, as her father also attended graduate school at the university.

A redshirt due to injury in her freshman year, France has one final year of eligibility, but she has used it to become one of USC's top runners, finishing in the top six in both the Gamescocks' 11th and 13th at the Commodore Classic. She is entering her 15th year as a competitor at the national level. "I was OK at Vanderbilt," France said. "I can't say that I was extremely excited about it," France said. "But this coming weekend, I'm hoping to really show what I've been working so hard for, and hopefully this weekend will be a better result than I've just had now."

"The whole point is just to constantly improve. I don't want to peak out so early in the season. Regionals are definitely a focus of mine, because I definitely want to make it to nationals. I'm just going to continue progressing and build off of the Vanderbilt meet."

The Gamescocks' top runner, freshman Kylia Lamp, finished second overall at the Commodore Classic, turning in a personal record time of 21:06.24 for a 4k. France said she and Lamp have already developed a close friendship. "Kylia and I are lucky enough to be training together every day, so it's nice being able to have that person to push me on days when I'm not feeling good. I can push her on days when she's not feeling so great," France said. "It's a very much a collaborative relationship, and I definitely feel like we've established a friendship in the short time that I've been here."

Lampe and France finished first and second in the Commodore Classic, USC's first competition of the season. That course was a 5k, but the rest of the team's races this year will take place on 6k courses. France said she is not too worried about it.

"I feel like it's such a different race," France said. "It's all about placing well and being able to go through the 1K and push yourself through the last 1K, but just being able to go where you are within yourself and push yourself as much as you can, so as long as we're not looking too much at time as you are at placing well."

France said she and her teammates are just adjusting to South Carolina, a university she always had in the back of her mind as a place she would like to attend.

"It's been a very smooth coming to USC," France said. "The team atmosphere is wonderful. I feel like a lot of people are just a lot of fun to be around, and I've really enjoyed it."

France said she has no trouble making the transition. "I've really enjoyed my first two meets here at USC so far. It's been a lot of fun to be a part of a lot of work to do. But I'm really excited about the season, the way this is going."