

CLAY TODAY

Six in a row for Spartans?
Three St. Johns Country Day School juniors hoping for a sixth Class 1A soccer title – **SPORTS**



Church woes
Churches seeing a decline in membership – **RELIGION**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2017

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New school district leadership team announced

School Board Chair's son among Superintendent Davis' Cabinet

By **Christiaan DeFranco**
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – Clay County School Superintendent Addison Davis, as promised from the Dec. 15 school board meet-

ing, released the names of his core staff last week.

The board voted to approve the list of candidates at last Thursday night's meeting.

Davis named Terri Dennis his chief of staff at \$81,000 per year. Dennis, who was Davis' specialist when he served as chief of schools in Duval County, will serve as a

liaison between Davis and the board.

Davis also named Nicole Snyder coordinator of communications and media partnership at a salary of \$75,000. Snyder comes to the position after having worked as a reporter for Jacksonville television station WJXT, Channel 4.

Davis also named Michael Kerekes coordinator of strategic planning and com-

munity partnership, a new position that has a salary of \$81,000. In December, Davis said he wants that person to help with initiative projects, "develop and drive a strategic plan" and "keep a goal-based management system."

Kerekes, an attorney and son of School

SEE TEAM, 19

Saving lives at 70 Clay doctor gets medical marijuana greenlight

By **Jesse Hollett**
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – Calvin Siegers' octagonal glasses and towering stature give him a sober scholarly appearance afforded only to physicians and scientists.

And while he appears at first glance to follow the conventional wisdom followed by physicians before him, Siegers, 70, is donning his physician's coat again to give access to medical marijuana in Clay County.

In November, Siegers completed a Florida Medical Association class and was certified to recommend medical marijuana to qualified patients. His registration with the Office of Compassionate Use makes him one of the first 15 doctors in Northeast Florida qualified to recommend the medicine, and the first in

SEE DOCTOR, 17



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRISTIAAN DEFranco

Cop to kid

Florida Highway Patrol Recruiter Michel Elder, left, and FHP Troop G Commander Steven Harris talk with students at Charles E. Bennett Elementary during "Law Enforcement Appreciation Day" held Monday. See story page 3.

Shelter rescues more than three dozen pets

By **Wesley LeBlanc**
For Clay Today

PENNEY FARMS – After a rescue that lasted until 10 p.m. Tuesday night, 36 animals are now safely in the care of Clay County Animal Control and Care.

After many calls for help to multiple shelters, a middle-aged Middleburg resident found the help she had been asking for yesterday afternoon when Animal Control officials arrived at the scene. Officers rescued 20 cats and 16 dogs and placed them under care of the shelter, a process that lasted well into the night.

What began as taking in one stray dog quickly grew into a litter of puppies. As time went on, the number of dogs continued to grow, as did the number of cats taken in.

"What happens is you get a good Samaritan who receives calls of stray animals and

SEE PETS, 17

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Medical marijuana moratorium measure moves forward

By Debra W. Buehn
Correspondent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — Clay County commissioners took their first formal steps toward dealing with medical marijuana dispensaries and treatment centers at their Jan. 10 meeting by giving a nod to a moratorium on the issue.

The commissioners actually took no action on the proposed ordinance that would implement the temporary moratorium because it was presented in a first public hearing, which requires no action. They will take an official vote when the ordinance is presented at a second public hearing at their Jan. 24 meeting.

However, commissioners made it clear they were leaning in the direction of the moratorium in order to make sure they were working in the correct direction.

"Let's make sure we get this right," said Wayne Bolla, chairman.

The commission joins a number of other Florida cities and counties that are also imposing moratoria. Part of the need for the moratoriums is because the state has six months to come up with a framework of regulations dealing with the medical marijuana dispensaries and treatment centers. Until the state deals with the issue, the local governing cities and counties have little guidance in structuring their own regulations.

The subject of medical marijuana came to the fore in the fall, when the issue appeared on state ballot in the November elections. State voters passed what is known as Amendment 2, which expands

the availability and use of medical marijuana to a much larger group of people than it has been available to in the past. But Clay County's Land Development Regulations do not deal with using property to cultivate, process, distribute or lawfully sell "medical marijuana, low- THC cannabis or related activities," states Holly Coyle, the county's director of economic and development services in a memo to the BCC.

Due to the passage of Amendment 2, Coyle said that if a licensed dispensing organization wanted to operate in Clay County, the county would need "sufficient time to research, study and analyze the potential impact and compatibility of medical treatment centers or approved dispensing organizations upon adjacent land uses and the surrounding areas, traffic, congestion, surrounding property values, demand for county services and other aspects of the public safety and welfare" to develop its related zoning and land use regulations.

The moratorium will allow county staff to deal with such things, county leaders have said.

Only one person spoke during the public hearing about the moratorium ordinance. Richard Klinzman, who ran for a seat on the county commission in November but was defeated, said he did not think it was right to impose a moratorium, as it would negatively affect people who could benefit

from medical marijuana.

"Don't let this drag out for a year," he said. "There are a lot of people that can benefit very, very immensely from the technology today."

Klinzman said he believed people were confusing the type of marijuana and its use as it has been approved in Florida with what has been approved in Colorado, which basically has given the green light to recreational use of marijuana.

"Ignorance begets fear," he said, "which leads to hatred and cruelty."

Again pleading for the commissioners to vote down a moratorium, he concluded, "It's cruel, it's unusual and it's beneath us."

But the commissioners took exception to the idea of a moratorium being cruel, repeating that they just wanted to make sure what regulations they came up with were the right ones.

Vice Chairwoman Diane Hutchings said she had been doing a lot of research on the issue and believed the "conundrum" was that it should really be the FDA that oversees pharmaceuticals but it's been left to the states. Dealing with licensed dispensing organizations and medical marijuana treatment centers is "unchartered territory," she said, and should not be taken lightly.

"I do want to make sure we do this right," she said, adding, "I want them to

look like pharmacies, not candy stores.

"We need to make sure we safeguard our community," she said.

While the moratorium would be approved for a year, commissioners and staff said they would work as quickly as they could after the state came up with its framework for regulations to set the county's related land use regulations.

"I think it will be a short, short lived process," said Commissioner Gayward Hendry.

The Clay County Planning Commission has also dealt with the issue of the medical marijuana moratorium. At its Dec. 6 meeting, most planning commissioners said they did not agree with the idea of a moratorium. Both Chairman Joe Anzalone and Vice Chairwoman Belinda Johnson said they knew of families who had benefited from the use of medical marijuana and the county should move quickly on the issue.

But at its Jan. 3 meeting, when the Planning Commission was actually presented with the proposed ordinance on a moratorium, the commission voted to endorse it as it moved on to the Board of County Commissioners.

Anzalone said he had done research on the situation since the December meeting, and found out about the state having to come up with its regulations that would then be handed down to the cities and counties in Florida.

The Planning Commission acts as an advisory board to the BCC, which has the final say on all items.

Spring Park restoration nearing completion

By Christiaan DeFranco
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — The wait is nearly over.

Renovations to Spring Park, the namesake and centerpiece of Green Cove Springs, will be finished soon, according to city officials.

"Things are starting to progress a lot quicker now, since we've gotten done most of the underground work," Assistant City Manager Mike Null said at Tuesday night's City Council meeting. "We're looking at a timeframe for completion of the end of February or early March."

Workers broke ground on the \$2.4-million project on April 28 of last year, with an initial targeted finish time of last October

or November. The majority of the funding is coming from the city's 1-Cent Infrastructure Sales Tax. Green Cove Springs also received a small amount of money from the state and some private donations.

The project includes reconstructing the 135,000-gallon swimming pool that is fed by the spring boil, which is in fragile shape and being repaired. The spring boil is where water surges up from the natural underground sulphur spring. The water feeds into the swimming pool and then into Spring Run, the nearby creek that flows into the St. Johns River.

The refurbishment also includes a two-story pavilion, which will maintain a historic look with stone and stucco walls and



Here's how Spring Park will look when finished in the coming months. The project was originally on track for a January opening but has been pushed back a couple of months.

SEE SPRING PARK, 18

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Cops and kids chat and learn over lunch

By Christiaan DeFranco
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The cafeteria at Charles E. Bennett Elementary, normally teeming with children, was extra crowded on Monday.

At every long, low-seating cafeteria table – ergonomically designed for tiny people – fully grown cops maneuvered their way onto the stools to sit across from students as they ate.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office, including the sheriff himself, was there. So were the Green Cove Springs Police Department, Florida Highway Patrol and U.S. Marshals Service.

As the children enjoyed their lunches, they chatted with members of law enforcement about a range of important topics, such as what they want to be when they grow up, who's their favorite movie character, and what's their favorite subject in school.

"We just want to let them know we're people," Steven Harris, Troop G Commander with the Florida Highway Patrol, said. "It's about engagement. It's important for us to get out in the community."

Harris and several other members of law enforcement gathered in the school cafeteria and chatted with kids during the lunch periods.

Janie Lloyd, who heads the media center and outreach at Bennett Elementary, knew about "Law Enforcement Appreciation Day" and contacted the Clay County Sheriff's Office with the idea of having officers come in. The event grew from there.

"We just thought it would be great for our kids and the police to interact in a friendly, safe, fun atmosphere," Lloyd said. "We hope that events like this will help bridge some of the divides we have in our communities. Our kids are very excited."

"It's absolutely essential to have kids from a young age see the police in a positive light. Once they get into high school, it could be too late."

Clay County Superintendent Addison Davis also attended and echoed Lloyd's sentiment.

"What an awesome day when we get a chance to celebrate law-enforcement officers," he said. "Very seldom do we get to see them on the other side of the interaction process. If we can start early in kids' lives, it really creates norms and expectations. It lets students know that law enforcement is really supportive and on their side."

"It's an opportunity to introduce young people to our everyday heroes."

SEE LUNCH, 23



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRISTIAAN DEFRANCO

Clay County School Superintendent Addison Davis, left, and Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels share a laugh at Charles E. Bennett Elementary, where area law-enforcement agencies were meeting with students for "Law Enforcement Appreciation Day" on Monday.

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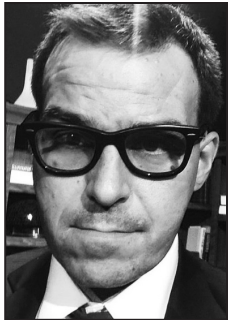
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'Breach of the peace' may be a relic of the past

By A.G. Gancarski
FloridaPolitics.com

Florida Statute defines "breach of the peace" with language from a bygone era, describing it as "acts ... of a nature to corrupt the public morals, or outrage the sense of public decency, or affect the peace and quiet of persons who may witness them."



A.G. Gancarski

Rep. Cord Byrd, a Jacksonville Beach Republican and 2nd Amendment purist, filed a bill Jan. 6 to amend relevant statute to remove that dated term ... and to offer recourse for gun owners who had weapons seized by law enforcement and have been frustrated in recovering their property because statutory language allows law enforcement to keep weapons seized in an investigation unless a court order is issued.

House Bill 6013 excises the "breach of the peace" language in statute, reframing offenses like brawling and fighting as "disorderly conduct."

Corruption of the public morals and outraging the sense of public decency didn't make the cut in Byrd's rewrite.

Byrd frames this "repealer bill" as an attempt to remove "duplicative laws" and "arcane provisions" from statute.

Meanwhile, the semantic revisions have a purpose.

SEE BREACH, 5

In the Great Game, government fights for the White Walkers and the germs

By Florence Snyder
FloridaPolitics.com

Life really does imitate Game of Thrones.

Republicans, Democrats, Lannisters and Starks fight over White Houses and King's Landings, but the future is trending in favor of the White Walkers and the germs.

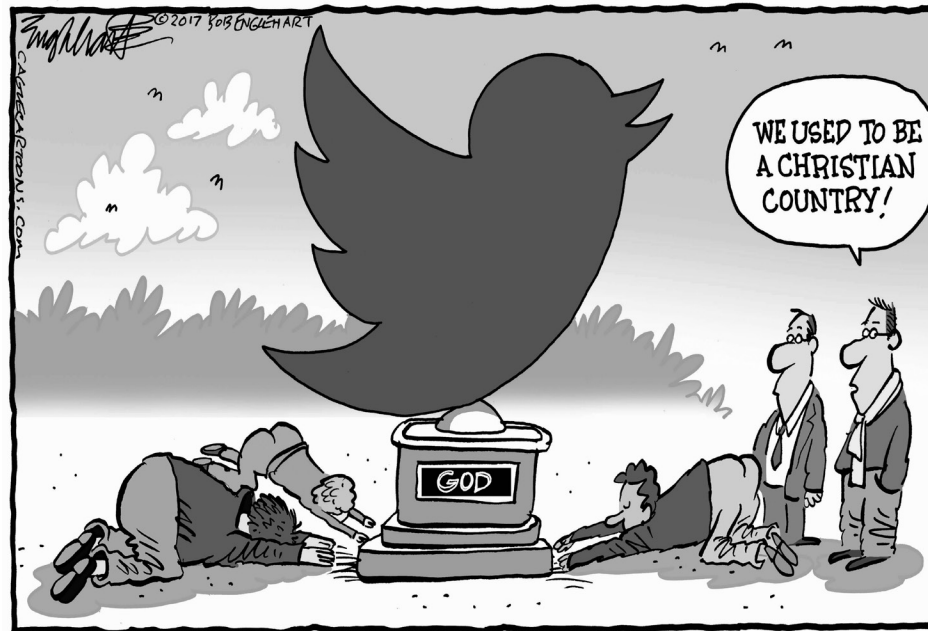
A timely reminder of The Coming Plague comes from USA Today investigative reporter Alison Young, who weighed in this week with new reporting on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's screw-ups in the handling of Ebola and other deadly viruses and bacteria.

The CDC dragged its feet for two years on Young's Freedom of Information Act request for incident reports about sloppy and

SEE GAME, 5



Florence Snyder



Guest Column

Reflections on social media

By Emil Knowles

As we view the world around us, we are influenced by our environment.

We, individually and as a society, allow things and people into our environment that influence us to think, feel and act in a certain way. Over the past few decades, technological advances have infiltrated our lives and now lead us to believe 'how can we live without those new tools we have at our disposal?'



Emil Knowles

These tools I am referring to are emails and other various social networks such as but not limited to Facebook, Myspace, Tweeting and texting. During this moment of reflection, I would like to explore how we are given these tools and how they are used in productive and non-productive ways.

Emailing and texting assists people in setting appointments, getting reminders, and can assist in managing our lives. How could we ever have lived without these tools and are we becoming dependent on them?

Everything in the world is changing and you have to adapt to the world around you in order to thrive. It may seem that in order to keep up with the changing world, we have to change too by using devices and social media to express our thoughts. Just because we adapt to the world of technology does not mean that we don't have to throw out reason and good judgment when using any type of technology to communicate.

Social media is a good way to stay "in touch" with others and a good way to communicate. However, let's look at the communication given.

Can you only imagine someone sending a text or email and the sender with intention of being humorous, but the receiver of

the email or text finding the information to be sarcastic? How many opinions are made about people due to their sent messages? When communicating with someone via any other way than face to face interactions, it is probably best to consider the possibility of how the sent communication could be received. Also, consider whatever you send, you can never get back.

When you're using social media, think about the way you want people to view you. Let's say you put some compromising photographs of yourself at a party on social media. Two weeks later you get a call from a potential employer and you have an interview for your dream job. Some employers will view prospective employees' social media accounts as a screening process. The employer views your social media account and you don't get the job. Some may argue that the employer has crossed boundaries, but it's out there for everyone to see. Also, does what type of employees an employer hires reflect the reputation of the business?

Another reflection that I have on social media is cyberbullying – using social media to bully others. Young people have chosen to take their lives – due to constant harassing messages – on social media.

Parents should be involved and be aware of what messages, links and photographs they're children are 'sharing' via technological devices. Also, you can rest assured that a child can figure out how to use the device, but as a parent, give your child some kind of direction on the proper etiquette of communicating with others

SEE MEDIA, 5

Letters to the Editor

Questioning Sen. Bradley's Stand Your Ground bill

After reading that state senators Rob Bradley and Greg Steube were sponsoring legislation to expand "Stand your Ground" defenses (Bradley) and open carry opportunities (Steube), I wrote to these legislators to express my concern about the disturbing incidents of gun violence. Bradley never responded to my email. Steube sent an email defending his "passion" for gun rights, stating that existing regulations adequately protected the public from the use of guns by those who might pose a threat to public safety.

I do not know what concerned citizens can do to counter the distorted values of those who glorify second amendment rights while dismissing concerns for public safety. The recent Ft. Lauderdale massacre should dispel the myth that current regulations are adequate to keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have access to firearms.

Following is the text of my message to state senators Rob Bradley and Greg Steube, written December 31, 2016.

Greg and Rob,

If you've been on the road lately, you should have had some pretty jarring experiences with drivers who have anger management issues, overcharged aggression or a disregard for the consequences of reckless driving. They speed while promiscuously switching lanes, cut off their fellow drivers, and ride your bumper. These same folks, who endanger public safety on the roads, may also possess firearms.

And now the Florida Senate is considering legislation that expands gun "rights" with regard to concealed carry opportunities and stand your ground defenses.

I'm married to a NRA life member and understand his support for the second amendment as a right of self defense. But, what I don't understand is the lack of concern for my personal safety, which is endangered when folks with impulse control issues, unhealthy aggressive impulses and poor judgment are armed.

Until there are laws that restrict gun ownership to only those who are psychologically fit and skilled in the use of guns, I strongly urge you NOT to support legislation that expands access to and use of guns. There's enough stress in life. Please don't compound it by making me feel unsafe when I encounter someone who appears to be psychologically unbalanced or too ready to take offense.

Elaine T. Weistock, Fleming Island

MORE LETTERS, 5

Corrections

In a police brief headlined "Clay teacher faces DUI" in last week's paper, the arresting agency should have been listed as the Green Cove Springs Police Department, not the Clay County Sheriff's Office.

Also, on Page 4's guest column, Christiaan DeFranco's photograph was incorrectly labeled as that of Jesse Hollett.

Letters to *the Editor*

A Christmas Story

It was Christmas Eve afternoon. I lost my wife almost seven years ago, and I dreaded Christmas and the holiday season. I was hoping to have won the lottery and escape somewhere and come back after the holiday.

Then some lady shows up at my door with a small dog. It was dirty, had matted hair. I said it was not mine, but I would try and find her a home. The lady was just passing through, and said the dog was lying in the street. I took the dog and went up and down the street looking for "lost dog" signs or picture. I called my granddaughter, who went online for lost dogs in Clay County. No response.

The next day I took her to my vet who gave her a bath for flea infestation, treated her for an intestinal infection

and suggested she needed further treatment. The next day, I took her to the Safe Animal Shelter on County Road 220. They treated her for round worm, gave her a distemper shot and dewormed her. They said they would keep her until we could find a loving family for her. I took her back home with me, I didn't want her to stay in a kennel by herself. She was very comfortable with me.

We had next treatment for ring worm scheduled today. On the way home from the grocery on Thursday, a sheriff's deputy called and asked if I had a small dog. I said I did and he said the owner had called and said I had stolen her dog. I said, you meet me at my house with the owner, with proof of ownership and she can have the dog. The neighbors said please don't give it back, it has been so

neglected. They have taken it in from the rain, fed and bathed it on occasion.

Well, the deputies came, she parked across the street as the dog went running to her. I had spent \$95 at the vet and Safe Animal Shelter. She was belligerent and said I along with the Safe Animal Shelter, wanted to steal her dog. She said I wanted the dog's reward. Never did she thank me for caring for her dog. I just wanted the dog healthy and in a loving home.

I called her "Little Bit" and she was my Christmas Angel. I was totally focused on her during Christmas and thank God for this little angel.

Leon Brown, Orange Park

Breach

from page 4

Byrd asserted, in a Friday conversation with FloridaPolitics.com, that "breach of the peace is used as a mechanism to deny people their firearms."

His bill seeks to strike a provision from statute: "No pistol or firearm taken by any officer with a search warrant or without a search warrant upon a view by the officer of a breach of the peace shall be returned except pursuant to an order of a trial court judge."

Byrd frames this requirement for a court order to return a citizen's firearms as a "statewide problem," one he has litigated himself, most recently in a case involving the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office.

Breach of the peace, Byrd says, is used as a catch all to allow law enforcement overreach against citizens.

That said, in a case where someone has been accused of a crime involving a fire-

arm, the court order would apply.

Oyrd also filed a second bill last Friday.

HB 175 tweaks provisions related to the Florida Court Educational Council, mandating that "The Florida Court Educational Council shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the operation of the Court Education Trust Fund and the expenditure of the moneys deposited in the trust fund."

Byrd asserts that his bill "reduces wasteful government administration which will save tax dollars so that they can be used to better serve Floridians not bureaucrats."

Among other changes, the bill caps administrative costs at 15 percent, and caps employee count at 3 full-time workers.

The bill also requires yearly reporting on the uses of the fund to leadership of the Florida Senate and Florida House.

A.G. Gancarski covers Jacksonville City Hall and other beats for FloridaPolitics.com. His column appears courtesy of FloridaPolitics.com.

are appropriately staffed, equipped and maintained. But government can always be counted upon to support the CDC's Department of Don't You Worry Your Pretty Little Taxpaying Heads.

Reporters who write about threats to public health suffer from poor pay, the constant threat of being laid-off or transferred to the Deal Diva beat and have a round-the-clock migraine from banging their heads against The Government Stone Wall of Secrecy, Silence and Spin.

This blast from the Nieman Reports past reminds us just how much time these public servant-journalists spend "talking to the hand." It's a chilling collection of horror stories about the "complete lack of respect for the public in the way...agencies operate" to block, tackle and bully reporters trying to tell stories that might cause a run on the Torch & Pitchfork Depot.

Right now, the germs are winning. On the present trajectory, we all might get repealed and replaced.

Florence Beth Snyder is a Tallahassee-based lawyer. She appears courtesy of FloridaPolitics.com.

Media

from page 4

and being responsible for their actions. As a parent, periodically check your child's social media accounts and cell phones. A child may not like it, but is it the right parenting thing to do?

In this article, I have briefly addressed some of the benefits and concerns with social media, emails and texting. Allow your-

self to be cognizant of how you interact with others especially when communicating by technological means. Just remember that the way you communicate with others is a reflection of how others see you.

Emil Knowles is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and a National Board Certified Counselor with an office in Green Cove Springs.



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Game

from page 4

quest for incident reports about sloppy and potentially fatal missteps at its laboratories in Atlanta and Ft. Collins, Colorado. Apparently, that's how long the CDC's Department of Making Documents Look Like Swiss Cheese needed to review 503 pages of reports and redact the living daylight out of them.

Young and her colleagues in the paper's investigative reporting unit are the sweat and muscle behind Biolabs in Your Backyard, an exhaustive and exhausting look at "vials of bacteria gone missing, escaped lab mice carrying deadly viruses, wild rodents making nests in research waste" and myriad other tidbits and outrages you won't read about in government press releases.

Along with America's roads and bridges, our public health infrastructure is teetering on the brink of collapse. Government won't cough up the money necessary for scientists and researchers to do their essential work in the safety of facilities that



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School board delays action for whistleblowers

By **Christiaan DeFranco**
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – The Clay County School Board postponed voting on a revised anti-fraud policy, which was intended to protect whistleblowers, at its meeting last Thursday night, citing concerns over the revised language.

“Any employee who reports actual or suspected fraud or any other illegal conduct in good faith shall not be subject to retaliation,” the revised language read.

“Any employee who feels he or she is the

subject of any such whistleblower retaliation may file a complaint with the Superintendent, the Florida Chief Inspector General or any other appropriate state agency.”

The new language defined the superintendent as the “agency chief inspector” unless the suspected fraud involves the superintendent or a school board member.

The policy revisions are a response to an investigation into allegations that several principals, staff members and former Superintendent Charles Van Zant Jr. deliberately mislabeled students as disabled to increase graduation rates. The Florida Association of District School Superintendents, a lobbying organization, conducted that probe after the allegations were made public August 4, 2016.

Board Chairwoman Janice Kerekes, a political rival of Van Zant’s, argued last

month the original investigation could be viewed as a conflict of interest. She and Vice Chair Carol Studdard said the inquiry may also have been incomplete, because they had heard of people with information who hadn’t been interviewed but were afraid to come forward out of fear of retaliation.

However, Renna Lee Paiva, president of the Clay County Education Association, said at the Jan. 5 meeting that she found the revised language confusing. She added that she had heard varying opinions on whether the language was legally adequate.

“I agree with Ms. Paiva that it’s not in the right format,” Kerekes said of the revised policy. “I think we should look at it some more and bring it back in a better format. I would like to strike it (from the agenda). We really should get it right.”

The board unanimously voted to table the item without a date to revisit the issue.

Kerekes drafted a letter to Florida’s Inspector General last month requesting a review of the original investigation and – if the Inspector General found the original inquiry to be insufficient or biased – a new independent investigation would be conducted. The board, despite some misgivings by board members Ashley Gilhousen and Betsy Condon, had previously approved 5-0 sending such a letter.

Clay Today made a public records request to Clay County School District for

the letter to the Inspector General, but was denied based on an “ongoing investigation.” However, the original investigation concluded last year.

In other business, the board laid out its legislative priorities for 2017 in advance of the Florida Legislature convening its regular session March 7. Clay County’s priorities this year include three main bullet points:

–Revise Florida statutes and related State Board of Education rules regarding third grade promotion and retention to provide clearly defined alternative pathways for student promotion and retention with a more balanced approach that considers both assessment results and local evidence of student performance; ensure that the final decision on student promotion and retention is made at the local level; ensure that student promotion or retention is not dependent upon, or denied by, a single assessment result.

–Restore and support the authority of the school district to levy, by simple majority vote, up to 2.0 mills for capital outlay purposes and maintain the current authority of school districts to determine the use of local capital outlay millage revenue.

–Provide sufficient per-student funding to place Florida in the upper quartile nationally.

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Letter to *the Editor*

Say no to Corey hire, reader says

It strikes me so funny that when we here in Clay County voted Angela Corey out of office that would be a final matter but come to realize our new Sheriff Daniels hired her to be a member of his law enforcement council and become part of our Clay County Sheriff Department.

Angela Corey should have never been

hired by our new Sheriff but since he has done this makes me wonder why he would need an ex-state attorney to help run his department and how competent he will be in his every day duties as our sheriff. He presents an attitude that he is not sure of himself in law enforcement and as a constituent of Clay County, I absolutely disapproved with Sheriff Daniels hiring Corey

and this one thing we can remember when election time comes around for his prospect of re-election.

In other matters, the extension of the Orange Park contract for these red light camera's was a disappointment because I cannot concieve how giving a ticket to a car could be legal and if you happen to own the car you will be cited, which I have ar-

gued to the point to Rep. Travis Cummings that this practice was unconstitutional because it deprives the due process of law guarantee to everyone in this country and is another way of making extra revenue for the cities' coffers.

Harry "Archie" Archond
Orange Park



Roger A. Suggs, CFA, AAS, CCF Clay County Property Appraiser

Announces to Clay County Citizens:
Don't miss out on your property tax savings!



• General List of Ad Valorem Property Tax Exemptions and Reductions •

Homestead Exemption up to \$50,000

Additional Homestead Exemption up to \$50,000 for Persons 65 and Older with Limited Income (annual application and income verification)

Additional Homestead for Persons 65 and Older With at Least 25 years of Residency - Available to the Town of Orange Park and the City of Green Cove Springs Residents (annual application and income verification)

Totally and Permanently Disabled Persons Exemption (annual income verification required)

\$500 Exemption for Widows, Widowers, Blind Persons, and Totally and Permanently Disabled Persons

Conservation Exemption

Exemption for Disabled Veterans Confined to Wheelchairs

Veteran or First Responder Service-Connected Total and Permanent Disability Exemption or Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran

\$5,000 Exemption for Disabled Ex-Servicemember or Surviving Spouse

Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran who Died from Service-Connected Causes While on Active Duty or First Responder who Died in the Line of Duty and who was a Permanent Resident of Florida as of Jan. 1st of the Year the Veteran or First Responder Died

Homestead Ad Valorem Tax Credit for Deployed Military Personnel

Homestead Property Tax Discount for Veterans Age 65 and Older With a Combat-Related Disability

Agricultural Classification

Reduction in Assessment for Living Quarters of Parents or Grandparents

THE DEADLINE FOR FILING APPLICATIONS IS MARCH 1st.

Main Office:

County Administration Building
477 Houston Street, 2nd Floor
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
Telephone: (904) 269/284-6305
Fax: (904) 284-2923



Branch Office :

Park Central Plaza
1518 Park Avenue
Orange Park, FL 32073
Telephone: (904) 541-5332

For more information, please contact our offices or www.ccpao.com.

Community Calendar



HORSE SALE: Clay County Animal Care and Control will auction two horses, a gelding and a mare, on Jan. 12 at 10 a.m. The bidding

starts at a dollar. 3984 State Rd 16, just west of Penney Farms.

MEDITATION AND RELAXATION: Jan. 12 at 6:15 p.m. and Jan 21 at 10:30 a.m. led by Heartfulness Certified trainer Anish Mehra. Free and for all ages. Orange Park Branch Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave. (904) 278-4750.

ROUND ROBIN SHAKESPEARE: Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m., Fleming Island Public Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Join us as we begin reading "Measure for Measure." Meeting monthly to read one of Shakespeare's plays aloud, round robin style. Free Admission. No experience necessary. Everyone welcome. Come to read or just listen. Info, roundrobinshakespeare.com

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT: Meets Jan. 12 at 7 p.m., in the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room, fourth floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.

SOIL & WATER: The Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District holds its monthly meeting Jan. 13 at 2 p.m. at the Clay County Extension Office, 3463 State Rd. 16 W, Green

Cove Springs. Open to the public.

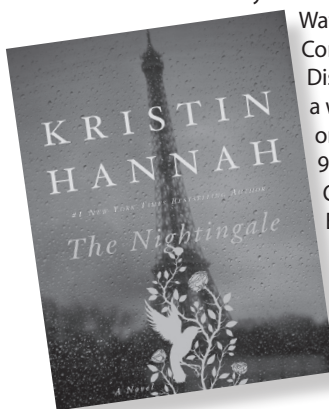
TODDLER TALES: Story time for ages 2-3 offered Jan. 13, Jan. 20 and Jan. 27 at 10:30 a.m. each date. Children can develop socialization, language, and listening skills and love of reading. Share the fun of language through stories, rhymes, and music. Orange Park Branch Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave. (904) 541-5815.

BABY BOOK WORMS: Storytime for age birth through 23 months-old offered Jan. 13, and Jan. 20 at 10:30 a.m. each date. Middleburg-Clay Hill Branch Library, 2245 Aster Ave., off County Road 218. Middleburg. (904) 541-5855.

PRESCHOOL ROMP & RHYMERS: Storytime for ages 2-5 years old offered Jan. 13 and Jan. 20, 2017 at 11 a.m. each date. Middleburg-Clay Hill Branch Library, 2245 Aster Ave. (904) 541-5855.

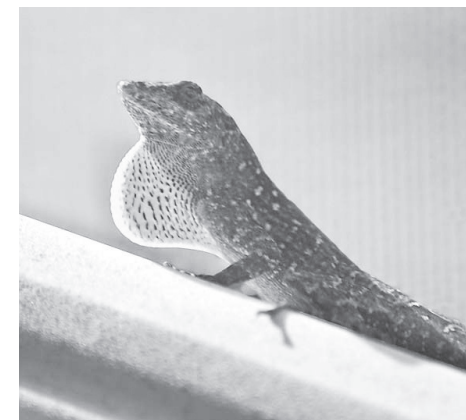
WORKSHOP: The Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District will hold a workshop on Jan. 14 at 9 a.m. at the Clay County Extension Office, 2463 State Rd. 16 W, Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

BOOK GROUP: Discuss "Nightingale" by Kristin Hannah, Jan. 14



from 10 a.m.-noon. No registration required, newcomers are always welcome. Fleming Island Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. (904) 278-3722.

FLORIDA REPTILES: Jan. 14 at 10 a.m. Clay County Extension Agent Wayne Hobbs presents a look at some of Florida's most



fascinating creatures. Kiwita Nature Center exhibits open 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Camp Chowenwaw County Park, 1517 Ball Rd., Green Cove Springs, (904) 529-8058. <http://CampChowenwaw.claycountygov.com>

FIRST COAST TEA PARTY OF CLAY COUNTY: Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m., Weigel Senior Center, 3916 Section St., Middleburg. Art Yeaman presents "Civics 101." Sandy (904) 282-1883, ClayTeaParty@gmail.com

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE: Meets Jan. 17 at 10 a.m. in the BCC Meeting Room, Fourth Floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Jan. 17 at 6 p.m., Clay County Administration Building, fourth floor, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.

100-DAY PLAN: Hear newly-elected Clay County School Superintendent Addison Davis discuss his plan for his first 100 days in office and give feedback about the school district. Jan. 17, 6:30 p.m., Fleming Island High, 2233 Village Square Parkway.

HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY: Meets Jan. 18 at 9 a.m. in the County Commission conference room B, fourth floor, County Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

STORY TIME FRIENDS: Jan. 18 and Jan. 25 at 10:30 a.m. each date. For children ages 2-5 featuring stories, finger-plays, music, movement and crafts. Keystone Heights Library, 175 Oriole St. (352) 473-4286.

PRESCHOOL STORY CIRCLE: Jan. 18 and Jan. 25 at 10:30 a.m. For children ages 3-7; offers children an opportunity to develop socialization, language, listening skills and love of reading. Share the fun of language through stories, rhymes, and music. Orange Park Branch Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave., (904) 541-5815.

LIBRARY BOARD: The Clay County Library Board of Trustees meets January 18 at 3:30 p.m. at the Clay County Library Administration Office, Fleming Island Headquarters Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Open to the public.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Jan.

LEGAL NOTICE NOTICE OF ELECTION

2017 SUPER TUESDAY MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS City of Green Cove Springs City of Keystone Heights Town of Orange Park

Pursuant to Section 100.021 of the Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the 2017 Super Tuesday Municipal Elections will be held on Tuesday, April 11, 2017, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at each respective Municipality.

City of Green Cove Springs 321 Walnut St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Seats One (1) and Two (2) for a three (3) year term of office on the Green Cove Springs City Council.

Qualifying for Seats One (1) and Two (2) will open Monday, January 30th at NOON and remain open until Friday, February 3rd at NOON at the at the Clay County Supervisor of Elections Office.

City of Keystone Heights 555 S. Lawrence Blvd., Keystone Heights, FL 32656

Seat Four (4) – (Mayor Seat) for a three (3) year term of office on Keystone Heights City Council.

Qualifying for Seat Four (4) - (Mayor Seat) will open Monday, January 30th at NOON and remain open until Friday, February 3rd at NOON at the City of Keystone Heights Office.

Town of Orange Park 2042 Park Ave., Orange Park, FL 32073

Seats One (1) and Two (2) for a three (3) year term of office on the Orange Park Town Council.

Qualifying for Seats One (1) and Two (2) will open Monday, January 30th at NOON and remain open until Friday, February 3rd at NOON at the Town of Orange Park.

Those interested in qualifying for Seats on the aforementioned City or Town Councils must be a qualified elector, a citizen of the United States and meet all other qualifying requirements as outline in each respective Municipal Charter.

A Run-off Election, if necessary for any Municipality will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of May.

For further information, please contact the Clay County Supervisor of Elections Office at (904) 269-6350.

In accordance with the Sunshine Law of Florida, this meeting is open to the public.

Note: Section 286.01105, Florida Statutes, states that if a person decides to appeal any decision by the board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at a meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purposes, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

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Scenic River Road to get redesign, upgrade

By **Jesse Hollett**
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – An Orange Park road with a legacy of controversy is in the works for a makeover.

Design work for the first of three phases to restore historical River Road in the Town of Orange Park will begin soon following unanimous votes from the town council Jan. 3.

Jacksonville-based Stone Engineering Inc. will design the road updates, which will include improvements to existing asphalt, walking paths and drainage systems. The town will pay the engineering group \$122,900 to complete the designs so the town can submit the project for proposals.

“There are needed repairs to the road and to the infrastructure,” said Sarah Campbell, town clerk. “The water and sewer lines and the storm water system and some of the pavement are just crumbling. There are manholes that are raised and that causes a hazard in the roadway. There are sidewalk issues – just a general improvement to the street overall, but there’s a lot of ways we can accomplish that.”

The project will also include the replacement of roughly 6,000 linear feet of existing water main and the replacement of water meters. The town has allocated \$475,000 for the buildout of the first phase of the road. Overall, Campbell said, the project will cost \$1.2 million.

At the same Jan. 3 meeting, council members also approved a \$33,500 design project for Miller Street. The town hopes to update the asphalt, curbing and drainage systems as well as replace meter boxes, meters and place roughly 2,000 feet of PVC water main.

The River Road project will be completed in three phases, although town officials aren’t yet sure whether they’re going to start on the Kingsley Avenue side of the road yet or not. What they don’t want, Campbell said, is to transform River Road into a pass-through destination for travelers looking to avoid the traffic backups on Park Avenue.

“While the road is in bad condition we don’t want to turn it into a highway as well. We have to maintain the neighborhood character so that it still gets its upgrades,” Campbell said.

The Town Council will hold a public comments section on the River Road project on Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. at the Orange Park Town Hall.

Residents on River Road have notoriously and historically fought actively any encroachment in the serenity afforded homes right along the scenic St. Johns River.

In April 1995, former council member Rene Wilke physically blocked a bulldozer

with her body to stop the town from installing a sidewalk in front of her house on River Road. Then-Town Attorney C. Edward Rich filed a lawsuit against the Wilke family. The town also filed a restraining order simultaneously to allow police to remove her if she once again tried to impede construction.

“I sat in a lawn chair with a beach umbrella on my property... I have not lost my zeal and it is not fading. I have always maintained that my husband and I own this property and we will fight for it,” the late Wilke wrote published in Clay Today.

Lawyers eventually dropped the lawsuit.

Campbell said she hopes public comment on the road project will allow residents to voice their concerns in a proper manner.

“I think it’s an important road in the town and citizens who live there are very much engaged in their neighborhood,” Campbell said.

The River Road and Miller Street projects are a part of a 10-year plan to renovate all outdated roads in the town, said Town Manager Jim Hanson.

The River Road resurfacing will work in tandem with another plan in the works to spruce up the popular road. Dubbed Kingsley East, the stretch of Kingsley Avenue east from Park Avenue to River Road is getting improved curbing, new landscaping, storm water drainage and new parking spots alongside the three-



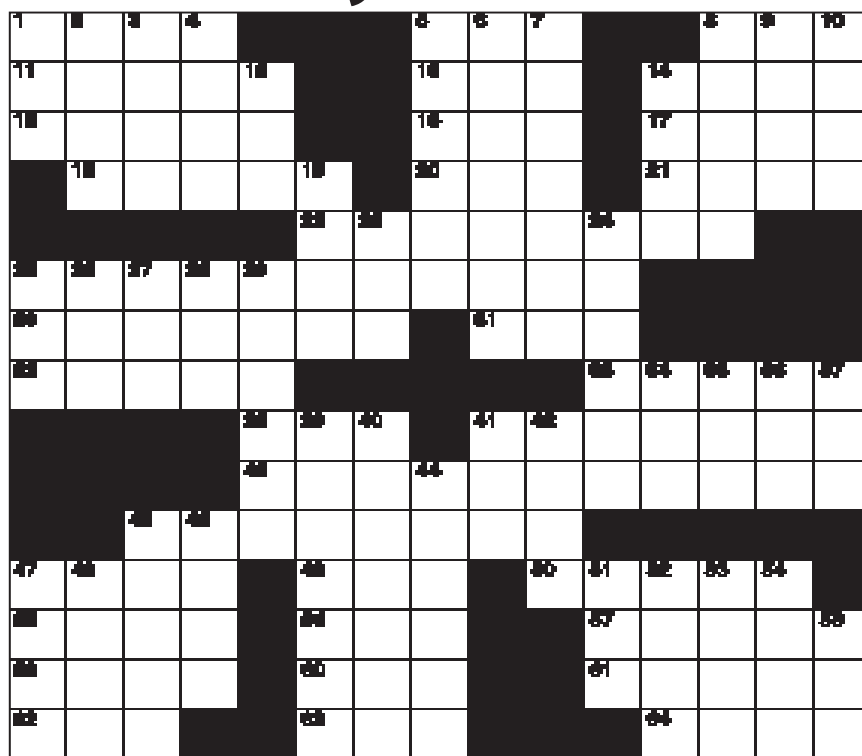
A collection of patched potholes and bumpy riding will soon become history as Orange Park Town Council moves forward with plans to resurface scenic River Road.

blocks at the elbow where River Road starts.

The town hopes to install the decorative lighting along the road if its \$802,000 budget isn’t consumed by the more necessary renovations.

Public Works Director Chuck Pavlos will hold a public presentation on the project at the Jan. 17 Town Council meeting. Campbell said the town could start accepting bids from contractors on the project as early as February.

Weekly Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Pain
- 5. Near the stern of a ship
- 8. Certified public accountant
- 11. External appearance
- 13. Neither
- 14. He played with Peter & Mary
- 15. Maximum
- 16. Irish republican organization
- 17. Swedish rock group
- 18. Source of chocolate
- 20. Counterparts to women
- 21. Type of levy
- 22. More tasteless
- 25. ‘Use Somebody’ rockers
- 30. Burst
- 31. Flightless, fast bird
- 32. Type of salami
- 33. Charges to live somewhere
- 38. Ji dynasty’s ancestral home
- 41. They play music
- 43. One who cancels
- 45. Resin from an African tree
- 47. Shellfish
- 49. Notre Dame coach Parseghian
- 50. Thoroughbred horse race: __

Stakes

- 55. Empire in pre-colonial C. Africa
- 56. Small piece of caramel
- 57. Hillside
- 59. Does great
- 60. Israeli city __ Aviv
- 61. Brief appearance
- 62. Danish krone (abbr.)
- 63. Midway between east and southeast
- 64. Database mgmt. system

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Sign language
- 2. In style
- 3. Syrian city
- 4. A long narrative poem
- 5. Living thing
- 6. Envision
- 7. Flat surface on a vessel’s stern
- 8. Scottish sport
- 9. They serve beer
- 10. Expression of sorrow or pity
- 12. When you expect to get there
- 14. Bullfighting maneuver
- 19. Double-reed instrument

- 23. Rural Free Delivery (abbr.)
- 24. Hardened
- 25. Small cask or barrel
- 26. Anger
- 27. Female religious figure
- 28. Central mail bureau
- 29. Ruled Russia
- 34. Geological time
- 35. Catches fish
- 36. As well
- 37. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 39. A moderately slow tempo
- 40. Female reproductive organs
- 41. Patti Hearst’s captors
- 42. Twitchings
- 44. Suitable for crops
- 45. Cavalry-sword
- 46. Greek sophist
- 47. Dressed
- 48. Tight crowd of people
- 51. Basics
- 52. ‘Raymond’ actor Garrett
- 53. Unstressed-stressed
- 54. Old World tree
- 58. Distress signal

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Marines slate January training exercise for Clay County

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – If Clay County residents see a little more military presence in the Green Cove Springs area later this month, there's a good reason.

The United States Marine Corps' 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit will have a Composite Training Unit Exercise in the Green Cove area from Jan. 20 to 23.

This training exercise is a normal pre-deployment activity performed by each US Navy Carrier Strike Group, along with embarked Marines and battle group aircraft.

The expectation is that the event will have minimal impact on residents. As well, organizers have planned for 911 calls, related to helicopter activity especially.

They have provided the following script to 911 operators.

"Marines and Sailors of the Expeditionary Operations Training Group and the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, based out of Camp Lejeune, N.C., are conducting COMPTU Exercise at the Avon Park and Green Cove Springs, FL, from January 20-23, 2017.

"The training is essential to the MEU's preparation for its deployment next year. It has been coordinated through federal, state, county and city agencies and officials, including the FBI, the FAA and local police departments."

A.G. Gancarski, FloridaPolitics.com

Obituaries

Kathleen Mary Maguire

Kathleen Mary Maguire, 59, passed away in Haven Hospice of Orange Park, January 8, 2017. She was born April 21, 1957 to a Marine Corps Family in Ft. Eustis, Va. After gradu-

ating from University High School in Irvine, Calif, she moved to Jacksonville, Fla. where she worked as a Medical Receptionist and married Ronnie C. Tobias and had a daughter. Years later she married Daniel P. Maguire and became a housewife and stay at home mother. Her passions were The Washington Redskins, The Florida Gators as well as music and cooking. She loved her family greatly. She would try to find humor in all she could because she loved to laugh. She will be greatly missed.

She is survived by: Kelly M. Davis, daughter, Thomas C. Kelly, father, Marie M. Kelly, mother, Thomas P. Kelly, brother, Patrick M. Kelly, brother and preceded in death by William S. Kelly, brother. In lieu of flowers the family asks a donation be made to Haven Hospice of Orange Park or the Michael J. Fox Parkinson's Foundation.



Kathleen Mary Maguire

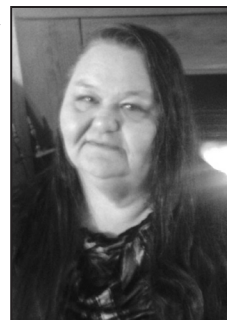
There will be a celebration of life service at the High Point Community Church, 84 Knight Boxx Rd on Thursday January 12th at 6 p.m.

Mary Ellen Hines

Mary Ellen Hines was born September 6, 1956 and went to be with her Best Friend and Savior, Jesus Christ, on December 30, 2016. She is survived by her husband, Loyd Hines of Green Cove Springs.

Her Memorial service will be held at her Beloved Church, Living Waters Worship Center, 1104 Idlewild Ave., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. at 11 am, Saturday, January 14th, 2017.

Please join her family and friends to share favorite memories and songs of her life. In lieu of flowers please consider donating to EzraInternational.org or send to PO Box 120926, Clermont Fl. 34712-0926 in her memory. One of Mary's greatest joys was helping children and others in need, She will be missed.



Mary Ellen Hines

Captain Robert Mate

Captain Robert Mate, 85 of Middleburg, FL passed away January 7, 2017. Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-7720. www.RHRFH.com



Obituaries

Obituaries 150 words or less	\$50
Over 150 words	\$75
Photo included	\$30
Notices	\$25
Funeral Home logos	\$10

For additional information please email Martha@opcfla.com.

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Obituaries

Christina "Gretch" Ross

Christina "Gretch" Ross, 29, of Green Cove Springs, Fla., passed away December 31, 2016. She was born on August 26, 1987 in Orange Park, FL.

She loved music and going to concerts. She was known as a free spirit who loved hanging out with her friends.

Survivors include her father, Christina "Gretch" Ross Gerald Ross (Courtney); mother, Toni D. Ross; great-grandfather, Candido Agbuya; grandparents, Ronnie and Judy Fountain and Ann Schiff; sisters, Heather Ross (Waylon Woods) and Amy Ross; aunt, Eve Parks (Dale); her niece and nephews that she adored, Laney Woods, Weston Woods and Braedon Meyers; cousins, Haley and Tyler Parks and her best friend and love of her life, Vic Williams.

A Memorial Service was held at 11:00 am Saturday, January 7, 2017 in the Broadus-Raines Chapel led by Billy Carter. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Arrangements are under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. (904) 284-4000



Justin Ray Conn

Justin Ray Conn, 28, of Green Cove Springs, Fla. passed away December 31, 2016. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Arrangements under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 (904) 284-4000.



William R. "Bill" Forrester

William R. "Bill" Forrester, 64, of Fleming Island, Fla., passed away January 2, 2017. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 (904) 284-4000.



John William (Black Mac) McDonald

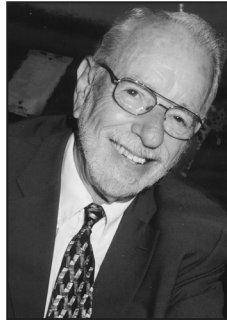
John William (Black Mac) McDonald. Born March 18, 1936, John passed peacefully in his home in Lake Asbury, Fla., Friday morning, January 6th, 2017 with his family at his side. John is survived by his soulmate and wife, Debbie, just days shy of their 27th anniversary; Children: Carol Jirmerson (Stan); Patrick, David, Trey and Kirsten; Grandchildren: Matthew, Pogie, Erin, Sean, Morgan, Kimberly, Ariel, Christopher, and Zach; Great-grandchildren: Aiden, MacKenzie, James, Olivia, and Max; sister, Jeannie Hardin. John is predeceased by parents, Lester and Alice McDonald and sister, Mary Sue Nuckolls; The family extends a special thank you to Dr. H. Page Ramezani, and Haven Hospice, especially Dr. Karenani and nurse angels, JJ and Shelia.

John was born in Chicago, Illinois, grew up in Hendersonville, NC, attended Georgia Tech, and joined the US Navy in 1956. He retired to Jacksonville, FL as a Lieutenant Commander in 1978. John was an F-8 aviator during the Vietnam era and served 8 years overseas during that time. He was a lifetime member of VFW Post 8255. Many medals were bestowed John during his Naval career including Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal w/One Gold Star, Air Medal Strike/Flight Twelve Awards, Navy Commendation Medal with Three Gold Stars, Navy Unit Commendation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Vietnam Service Medal w/Three Bronze Stars, Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation (Gallantry Cross Color w/Palm), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/One Bronze Star, and Expert Pistol Shot Medal.

Visitation is Friday, January 13, 2017 from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm at Russell Haven of Rest Funeral Home, 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL. Service and interment to follow at Russell Haven.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Haven Hospice, 741 Blanding Blvd., Orange Park, FL 32065 www.HavenHospice.org

Arrangements are under the care of Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. Family and friends may share their condolences at: www.RHRFH.com 904-284-7720



John William "Black Mac" McDonald



James D. "Jim" Frost

James D. "Jim" Frost, 83, of East Palatka, passed from this life on Sunday, January 8, 2017 at Putnam Community Medical Center following an extended illness.

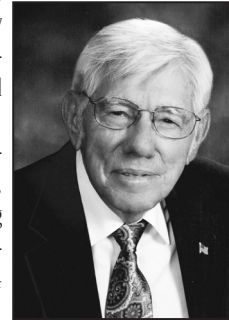
A native of Johnson County, Georgia, Jim started working with Rayonier in Jesup, Georgia in 1954 and then moved to Palatka in 1956 where he began working with Hudson Pulp & Paper. Jim retired in 1996 from Georgia Pacific as head purchasing agent after 40 years of service.

He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Palatka and the Antique Car Club. Jim's passions outside of his work were restoring antique cars and woodworking. He also enjoyed time spent at the river, the beach and his lakehouse on Little Lake Como.

In January of 2011, Jim was recognized by the Palatka Daily News in the Currents section for his devotion to caring for his beloved wife Betty for several years as she battled ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). He was preceded in death by his wife Betty Frost, his parents, E.L. Frost and Maude Dixon Frost and 3 brothers, David Frost, Jack Frost and Roy Frost.

Jim is survived by 2 daughters, Angela Willis (Wayne) of Palatka and Rebecca Jones (Steve) of Orange Park and 6 grandchildren, Summer Frost Jones, Alyssa Danielle Patterson (Kevin), Christian Daniel Jones, Cameron Stephen Jones, LaDonna Keyton and Lee Amon.

The family wishes to thank P.R.I.D.E. Home Health Care, Pam Johnson and Nannette Liverman, for the excellent care they provided for Jim over the past 4 1/2 years. Services celebrating Jim's life were held Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at the First Baptist Church in Palatka with Rev. Danny Harvey officiating. Entombment was followed at Palatka Memorial Gardens. The family received friends Wednesday at the church until the time of services. Flowers are gratefully accepted or memorial donations may be sent to First Baptist Church, 501 Oak St., Palatka, FL 32177. Memories and condolences may be expressed to the



James D. "Jim" Frost

family at Jim's Book of Memories page at www.Johnson-Overturffunerals.com. Arrangements are under the direction of Johnson-Overturf Funeral Home in Palatka.

Katherine M. Garrett

Katherine M. Garrett, 65, of Middleburg, Fla. passed away January 7, 2017. She was born in Trenton, MI on January 14, 1951 to the late Paul Delmont and Katherine (Perry) McCoy, was a lifelong resident of the area and of the Catholic faith.

Katherine enjoyed going to Disney World, gardening, arts and crafts and loved her dog, Freya. Family and friends was the most important thing in her life. She was a beloved wife, mother and grandmother.

Katherine is survived by her husband of 30 years, Duane Garrett; son, Sean Bente; daughter, Dawn Bente (Brian McGraw); brother, Kevin McCoy (Patricia); grandchildren, Amber, Hunter, Gunner and Summer Lalande and Skyler Bente and many nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends from 10:00am - 11:00am on Thursday, January 12, 2017 in the Broadus-Raines Chapel. Funeral services will follow at 11:00am with Dr. Tim McDaniel officiating. Burial with military honors will be at the Jacksonville National Cemetery at 1:30pm, Thursday, January 12, 2017. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Arrangements under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043, (904) 284-4000.



Katherine M. Garrett



MORE OBITUARIES, 12

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Obituaries

Georgianna N. Husted

Georgianna N. Husted, 71, passed away on January 3, 2017. She was born in Williamsport, Penn. and resided in Middleburg for 29 years.

Mrs. Husted was previously a member of American Legion Post 250, Ladies Auxiliary and a life member VFW Post 8255, Ladies Auxiliary.

She is predeceased by her husband Raymond C. Husted; parents; Willis & Nevada Hall. Survived by son; Robert. E. Brown; two daughters: Patricia (Jimmy Williams) Baker, Jennifer Husted; grandchildren: Elizabeth, Austin, Logan, Jesse, Christopher and TJ Becker; two sisters: Naomi (Jack) Wood, Rose Millerd; two brothers: Willis (Martha) Hall, Dayton (Karen) Hall; several nieces and nephews.

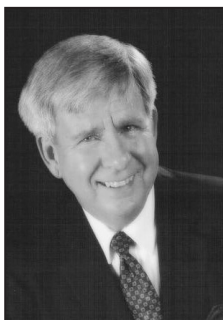
Family received friends on Sunday, January 8, 2017, 6-8pm at Hardage-Giddens Holly Hill Funeral Home, 3601 Old Jennings Road Middleburg, F.L. Funeral service were Monday, January 9, 2017 at Hardage-Giddens Holly Hill Funeral Home at 10 a.m. Burial followed in Holly Hill Memorial Park.

Please leave words of comfort at www.hollyhillfunerals.com.

Lt. Cmdr. Gerald E. "Jerry" Campbell, USN (Ret.)

Lt. Cmdr. Gerald E. "Jerry" Campbell, USN (Ret.), 70 of Doctors Inlet passed away Sunday, January 8, 2016.

Jerry was born in Providence, Rhode Island and moved to Clay County in 1974 from Pensacola, FL. He was a 1969 graduate of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Jerry retired from the US Navy and Navy Reserve as a helicopter pilot with over 500 missions during the Vietnam War and was



Lt. Cmdr. Gerald E. "Jerry" Campbell



awarded a medal for his actions after being shot down in Vietnam. Following his military career, he worked with American National Insurance Company for 28 years. He was a member of the Advent Lutheran Church of Orange Park where he served as Past President of the Congrega-

tion two times, Treasure, and many other areas in his 42 years as a member. He received his Masters Degree from the University of Central Michigan.

Mr. Campbell was preceded in death by his parents, Donald and Harriet Campbell and is survived by his wife of 42 years, Judy Campbell, brother, Keith (Susan) Campbell, three sisters, Anita (Paul) Gurgel, Marilyn (Ron) Schroeder, and Wendy (Mark) Crews, seven nephews, six nieces, several uncles and one aunt.

Memorial Services will be held 11:00 Saturday, January 14, 2017 at Advent Lutheran Church with Pastor Jerry Nordsiek officiating. Arrangements are under the care of Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. Family and friends may share their condolences at: www.RHRFH.com 904-284-7720

Barbara Ann Martin

Barbara Ann Martin, 70 of Green Cove Springs, Fla. passed away January 4, 2016. Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-7720 www.RHRFH.com



Wilma Chestnut

Wilma Chestnut, 78, of Orange Park, Fla. passed away January 3, 2017. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000



Jannette Delores Lamm Kendall

Jannette Delores Lamm Kendall, 77 formerly of Clay County passed away January 3, 2017. Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 904-284-7720 www.RHRFH.com



William L. Brown

William L. Brown passed away on Sunday, January 8, 2017. Aaron and Burney Bivens Funeral Home, 529 Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park, Florida 32073, (904) 264-1233.



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In Spirit

Clay Today | January 12, 2017



Faith Walk

Dr. William P. Register
First Assembly Fleming Island

CONTENTMENT

"I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content."

These are the words the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian church. He wrote the epistle to that church from prison and he wanted to assure the Christians at Philippi that he was not in need. In fact, he was satisfied with his condition.

Compare the attitude of Paul with the expectations of many people today. Most people have a list of things they say it will take for them to be content. These are usually "things" they believe they need to have in order to be happy or content.

Paul had learned it was not "things" that will bring contentment, joy and happiness. He knew that true contentment is based in trust in the Lord.

There is an area of contentment in life where we can live through our faith in Him. To do this, there are some things we need to understand. Here are some things for you to consider:

First, we cannot live in fear. Growing in the love of God is the antidote to fear. Many live in fear of the future, unable to trust God for His will and plan. If we will develop God's love in our lives, fear will vanish. The Bible says, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear..." (1 John 4:18) We do not have to fear, either, life or death.

Second, we cannot live in the past. Most people have things they want to remember and things they want to forget. Any experiences that hold us to the past must be given up at the Cross.

Third, we must lean wholly on God's grace which is expressed in us by His love and mercy.

These are beginning steps to living in joy, favor and contentment.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain." (1 Timothy 6:6)

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Orange Park meditation offers respite from life's distractions

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – Eleven men and woman sat with their eyes closed, silent, still as statuettes while the sun fell and the moon rose outside.

Some are veterans to meditation. Others are newcomers. All sit motionless, every muscle loose and relaxed despite stressful days full of anger, danger and distraction.

Meditation teaches practitioners to release all of the baggage of the day, invoke a single base thought and focus on the "source of light in the heart."

Since last July, meditation instructor Anish Mehra with the global meditation and spirituality nonprofit Heartfulness Institute has held meditation classes in a solar-powered, off-the-grid building behind the Granary Whole Foods store on Kingsley Avenue. The class begins every Sunday evening at 5 p.m.

The free class serves as a continuation of meditation and relaxation education for veterans and an introductory handshake of sorts for newcomers to the ancient spiritual practice.

At its nucleus, Mehra describes the practice of meditation as the exercise of focusing on a single thought. He said, in this way, people are constantly meditating as long as they are focusing on one



Anish Mehra, left, sits in deep meditation with a class full of veterans and newcomers to the ancient practice in a class held Jan. 8.

single idea.

"It is so difficult in today's life when multi-tasking is so common, we have so many distractions," Mehra said. "To focus and help keep our minds still, meditation helps tremendously. Through meditation, we actually go inside us, not necessarily focusing on something external, but going into our inner abilities we have within us already present, the source of inspiration – the source of passion."

However, the meditation Mehra practices and teaches involves the heart more so than the mind. When a practitioner meditates on the heart, he said, "the heaviness inside of us starts to melt away."

The practice is comparable to hygiene for the heart. Mehra's meditation helps a practitioner floss away the "layers" of

SEE HEART, 14

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Churches seek to reverse trend of decline

By **Christiaan DeFranco**
Staff Writer

MIDDLEBURG – Beulah Missionary Baptist Church opened its doors in 1850. Sitting on State Road 21, it served residents of Green Cove Springs and Middleburg and, later, military folks who were staying at Camp Blanding.

Last year, Beulah Baptist closed its doors.

In recent times, the church founded before the Civil War saw its membership and donations steadily dwindle. Eventually, it couldn't afford to keep on the lights.

"They were having trouble for years," said Rev. Bobby Lewis, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Middleburg.

Beulah's rural location didn't help, as residents of Keystone Heights, Middleburg and more densely populated areas of Green Cove Springs found other places to worship. But that wasn't the only factor in Beulah's demise.

Many churches in Clay County – and, in fact, across the nation – are struggling to stay afloat. Many have shut down.

Less than 20 percent of Americans attend church, according to recent Gallup polling, and that number has been going down for the past two decades.

A Pew Research Center study found that in 2014, two-thirds of Americans identified as Christian – a nearly 10 point drop from 2007. During that same span, the percentage of Americans who identified as unaffiliated – agnostic, atheist or nothing in particular – rose nearly 10 points to 25 percent.

A few churches, like Beulah, despite



Beulah Missionary Baptist Church, because of declining membership numbers and financial trouble, became part of First Baptist Church of Middleburg last year.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRISTIAAN DEFRANCO

closing, have found new life. Beulah Baptist reached out to First Baptist of Middleburg last May, seeking some help, and First Baptist of Middleburg ended up absorbing Beulah's congregation.

This sort of practice has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, with larger churches often turning the struggling institution into a "satellite church." Also becoming more common is church "rehabilitation," in which a larger church lends its expertise and resources to help a smaller church recover from tough times.

First Baptist of Middleburg, which has about 3,600 members, didn't turn Beulah into a satellite location, but it does use the

Beulah buildings for other ministry functions, such as adult outreach events and

camp events for junior-high kids.

SEE DECLINE, 15

Church Briefs

Fourth Annual Ecumenical Vespers slated

JACKSONVILLE – Spiritual leaders from different faith communities in Northeast Florida will gather together for the Fourth Annual Ecumenical Vespers on Jan. 17 at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church, 3850 Atlantic Blvd. in Jacksonville. The service begins at 5:30 p.m.

The first Ecumenical Vespers in Northeast Florida was hosted by the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine in 2014, the second by the Episcopalians and the third by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. This year, thanks to Bishop Dimitrios Couchell and Father Nicholas Louh, the community will pray together for unity at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church.

Vespers is open to everyone. The gathering of faith leaders and the public is an inspiring sign of solidarity, according to a press release. After the celebration of Vespers, there will be a reception for all those in attendance.

For more information, contact Father Al Esposito, associate officer for Ecumeni-

cal and Interfaith issues for the Diocese of St. Augustine at (386) 864-2076, or by email, fatheral@smdmcc.org. No RSVP is necessary.

Gospel group coming to FIUMC

FLEMING ISLAND – A popular Nashville, Ga.-based gospel group is coming to an area church.

Fleming Island United Methodist Church will host the Keffers Family Gospel Quintet, live in concert, on Jan. 21 at 5:30 p.m.

While their family ministry and musical heritage spans over 30 years, it wasn't until 1992 that the Keffers were introduced to Southern Gospel radio and fans alike with their national debut. With 20 different recordings, The Keffers are seen regularly on Gospel Music Television. They are currently enjoying the success of their recent album project, "Proclaim The Cross."

The church, located at 7170 U.S. Highway 17, will also host a potluck dinner after the concert to follow. The event is a free, but a love offering will be collected. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to share for the potluck.

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TRY IT AGAIN ...

Decline

from page 14

"The fortunate thing about Beulah is that even though they were having a tough time, they didn't have debt, so we were able to take them in," Lewis said. "A lot of churches are debt-ridden, so they can't reach beyond themselves and receive help."

Lewis believes many churches, though not necessarily Beulah, have lost sight of their purpose. He believes it weighs heavily into why churches fallen on hard times.

"I've seen lots of the statistics, and there are many reasons for the declines in membership and attendance," he said. "There are theological reasons, cultural reasons and other factors, but let's just be honest: the church has not always done a good job of expressing God's love and making people feel welcome."

"Also, you have to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. Some people who profess to be Christians will go out to a restaurant and bow their heads and pray before their meal, but then they behave in ugly ways toward their server. People get turned off and they think, 'If that's what it means to be a Christian, I don't want any part of it.'"

Rev. Heather Harding of Fleming Island United Methodist Church echoed many of Lewis' sentiments. FIUMC has a congregation of a few hundred, which is much smaller than First Baptist, but it is thriving.

"Churches have become more inner-oriented organizations and forgotten about their walk, about outreach," she said. "Je-



Rev. Bobby Lewis, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Middleburg, said one reason churches have lost membership is because they simply no longer make newcomers feel welcome.

sus called for us to go out into the world.

"I think another problem is that we have linked religion and faith to politics. And that's not really an accurate thing to do, because people of all political persuasions are Christians. Not one particular political party has a monopoly on faith."

Lewis emphasized a need for outreach as well, as opposed to "in-reach," in which

the culture of certain churches become self-contained. At First Baptist of Middleburg, outreach includes online engagement. The church's website offers streaming videos of its worship services.

He said that some of the churches he has seen struggle most are those that teach loose interpretations of the Bible, in which Jesus "isn't the only way," but he

"Also, you have to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. Some people who profess to be Christians will go out to a restaurant and bow their heads and pray before their meal, but then they behave in ugly ways toward their server. People get turned off and they think, 'If that's what it means to be a Christian, I don't want any part of it.'"

— Rev. Bobby Lewis, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Middleburg

also warned against dogma.

"The opposite extreme of that type of evangelism is beating people over the head with the Bible," Lewis said. "I share my beliefs with others, but I'm not going to force my beliefs on anybody. Forced Christianity is not Biblical."

He added that Christians should respect people of all faiths, as well as people who are atheists or agnostics, even if they disagree with them.

"I actually think the declines in attendance are kind of a gift to the church, because it's a wake-up call to do what Jesus meant for us to do," Harding said. "So many people feel like they're not accepted by the church, whether because of their race, marital status, or socio-economic conditions. Many churches have shunned LGBTQ people."

"We want to be welcoming. We welcome everyone to share in God's love."

Email Christiaan DeFranco at chris@opcfla.com. Follow him on Twitter @cdefranco.

Heart

from page 13

impressions, good or bad, that everyone experiences every day, experiences that pile onto each other and fog the mind.

"The qualities of the heart are love, joy, warmth and happiness," Mehra said. "Meditation of the heart helps you become more aware of those qualities."

Meditation can help reduce blood pressure, anxiety, depression and insomnia according to studies conducted by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, a federal agency.

Other varieties of meditation used are for problem solving, idea generation and general relaxation. Mehra said the difference between meditation of the heart and other types of meditation is that a practitioner is able to connect to the very origin of inspiration.

The NCCIH is currently examining the effects meditation has on teens who have chronic pain and those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Brain scans performed on those who meditate regularly have also shown increased mental focus and even cognitive ability, according to a study by Italian neuroscientist Giuseppe Pagnoni.



Meditation attendees from Clay County and Jacksonville sat still and silent for 37 minutes straight.

Mehra said a group meditation increases the length a person can focus substantially.

"I've tried [meditation] before, but I've never had the strength to go more than maybe five minutes. I guess being in a class session once I got to that threshold I was kind of forced to stick through it, which made it a little easier," said Chris Carey, who lives with attention deficit disorder and attended his first guided medita-

tion at Sunday's class.

"Dealing with the ADD, everything kind of moves at a fast pace all day, constantly thinking about something new, to do what I missed, what I forgot. At that moment, everything slowed down...and so much more peaceful."

Controlling thoughts is not the point of meditation, Mehra said.

"Think that you are sitting in a train, everything else is a scenery that is passing

by," he said. "You are looking outside the window, you don't have control of what is passing by [just like] you don't have control on what cars are going to pass by on the road."

The overall goal is to increase the length practitioners can meditate over time.

Nelson and Julie Hellmuth, who own the Granary, opened the off-the-grid building in the back of their store eight years ago and have since held a number of classes in it. They attend the class every Sunday, Nelson said.

According to Mehra, one of the most striking realizations he's had about meditation since he began the practice on a whim in 1995 has been its widespread and unprejudiced practice.

"This can be done by anyone of any religious, social, cultural, economic background," Mehra said. "People from all different religions and continents practice this. There is no religious connotation, it is non-denominational."

However, he said, "There is a spiritual element. The idea of spirituality is to seek within. Irrespective of religious background... [meditation contains] that idea of connecting with the ultimate, with the absolute. You can go back to that connection within your heart."

Calendar

from page 8

Jan. 18 at 6 p.m., Clay County Fairgrounds, J.P. Hall Building, 2497 State Rd. 16, Green Cove Springs. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.

PENNEY FARMS HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. Kevin Hooper, author of "An Early History of Clay County- A Wilderness That Could Be Tamed," presents "Clay County and the Civil War" taken from more than 20 years of research. Penney Farms Town Hall, 4100 Clark Ave.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Jan. 19 at 6 p.m., Asbury United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 16 College Dr. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.



HELLCAT RACES: Help raise funds for the Military Museum of North Florida in Green Cove Springs, run in any of the Hellcat 10K, 30K or 50K races on Jan. 21. Registration fees are \$40, \$50 and \$60, respectively. The course is around the perimeter of the Lee Airfield navy base now known as Reynolds Industrial Park. The museum will be open free of charge for all runners and their families. Register at <http://www.hellcatrace.com/> or call Chris Rodatz, (904) 655-6511.

KEYSTONE CRAFTY KIDS: Entertaining and creative arts & crafts fun offered Jan. 21 at 11 a.m. for grades 2-6, Keystone Heights Library, 175 Oriole St. (352)473-4286.



PITCH IN THE PARK: Clay County's first-ever innovation festival where 18 innovator exhibitors pitch their ideas to judges and the audience for a chance to win cash prizes and a startup prize package. Audience participation is encouraged and needed as the audience vote counts as 50% with the judges the other 50%. Jan. 21 from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., Orange Park Town Hall Park. Info, pitchinthepark.com.

FREE CONCERT: Rare Song performs Jan. 22 in Penney Memorial Church, Penney Farms, at 7 p.m. as part of the Commemorative Concert Series. Dressed in period costumes and playing old instruments, this ensemble of professional musicians from Jacksonville and St. Augustine performs "Olde English" music.



AUDITIONS: Seeking 2 women and 2 men for the upcoming drama, The Glass Menagerie, Jan. 22-23 at 7 p.m., Orange Park Community Theatre, 2900 Moody Ave. Production dates run March 24-April 9. Audition participants should prepare one minute dramatic memorized monologue. Possible readings from the script as well. Info, Aimee Low at aimee.a.ortiz@gmail.com.

MOTHER GOOSE ON THE LOOSE: More than just a good story, MGOTL offers interactive activities, finger plays, songs, poems, crafts and games, Jan. 23 and Jan. 30 at 10:30 a.m. for ages 0-24 months. Orange Park Branch Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave. (904) 278-4751.



SPROUTING: GROWING YOUR GARDEN WITH SEEDS: at the UF/IFAS Clay County Extension Office, 2463 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs, Jan. 23 from 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$18 for pre-pay; register at www.eventbrite.com or \$20 at the door. Guests receive seeds and supplies to start a garden.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Jan. 25 at 6 p.m., Keystone Heights City Hall, 555 S. Lawrence Blvd. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify

issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.

MASTER GARDENER: Clay County Master Gardener, Cotton Morlock, presents pruning tips to get ready for spring along with selecting and caring for your garden tools Jan. 25 at 6:30 p.m., Fleming Island Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Workshop sponsored by Garden Club of Fleming Island. Free and open to the public. No registration required.



GIANT BOOK SALE: Jan. 26-28 at Orange Park Public Library hosted by Friends of the Orange Park Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave. in meeting rooms A & B. Find hundreds of gently used, books at low, low prices. All proceeds benefit Orange Park Library.

SHAPING CLAY: Network with nonprofit organizations that serve Clay County. Jan. 27 from 8:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m., St. Vincent's Medical Center Clay County, 1670 St. Vincent's Way. This month's discussion will be the development of a resource directory of community services and nonprofits.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2ND ANNUAL CAR SHOW: Special Olympics Florida - Clay County Annual Car Show on Jan. 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine, Clay County Fairgrounds, 2497 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs. All makes and models welcome. \$25 to register. Free to the public. Music and fun, food, silent auction, door prizes, trophies, games for the kids. Proceeds benefit Clay County Special Olympic Athletes.



YESTERDAYS FESTIVAL: Mike Roes Gold Head Branch State Park and Gold Head Associates Inc., present the 13th annual Yesterdays Festival, Jan. 28 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at 6239 State Road 21. Come for the day and enjoy this unique, affordable and family friendly event. The festival is free to attend with the purchase of park admission, \$5 per vehicle, up to 8 people in a vehicle.

CAMELLIA GARDEN DAY: and Camellia Plant Sale hosted by top American Camellia Exhibitors Chuck and Bev Ritter, Jan. 29, noon-1

4 p.m., come enjoy some amazing camellia blooms and great company on a private camellia tour day. Proceeds benefit the Melrose Public Library. \$5 per person, (352) 316-5681.

FREE CONCERT: Enjoy the highly talented trio JB Sessions Band perform 'Smooth Jazz' to Rhythm and Blues Jan. 30 from 6:30-7:30 p.m., Fleming Island Public Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Open seating. No tickets required.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Jan. 31 at 6 p.m., Fleming Island Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING: Feb. 1 at 6 p.m., Middleburg/-Clay Hill Library, 2245 Aster Ave., Middleburg. Give input about the Clay County Comprehensive Plan and help county staff assess how well the Plan is working, any deficiencies it has and recommend changes to the Goals, Objectives or Policies, and identify issues affecting the County that should be addressed by revising the Plan.



CHILI COOK OFF: Feb. 4 with 10 a.m. registration and public judging at 1 p.m., Chiappini's Gas Station, Melrose, to benefit the Melrose Public Library. Limited electricity, cooks should bring gas stoves and utensils. \$3 for a spoon tasting or \$5 per bowl. Debbie Ellingham, (9352) 258-3531.

PLANNING COMMISSION: Meets Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. in the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room, fourth floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.

FREE CONCERT: Scott Kirby, composer, pianist and visual artist, comes to Barrows Hall, Penney Farms, on Feb. 8 to present a combination of music and his own paintings. Kirby has achieved rarified status as a performer of ragtime and related American styles. The event is part of the Commemorative Concert Series.

MORE THAN JUST DIRT: Evelyn "Prissy" Fletcher, UF/IFAS Putnam County Horticultural Agent and Master Gardener coordinator, presents this program Feb. 13 at 10 a.m. at the Fleming Island Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Public is invited to attend. Info, (904) 264-3986.

EMPTY BOWLS: Salvation Army's 15th Annual Empty Bowls Luncheon will be held April 4 at the Orange Park United Methodist Church's Family Life Building. Tickets will be \$20 each. Still seeking door prizes, auction items and sponsors for Empty Bowls 2017. Judy White, (904) 607-4150.

Pets

from page 1

takes them in," said Andrea Cassman, founder and president of Friends of Clay County Animals.

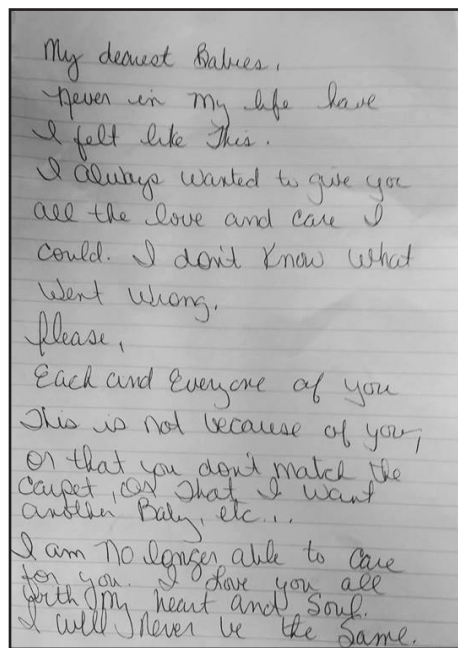
According to Cassman, this woman is one of three kinds of people. "There are people that are true hoarders, there are good Samaritans that simply get in over their head and there are backyard breeders," she said.

Cassman believes this woman to be the second of the three.

A backyard breeder differs in that they illegally breed dogs, usually for monetary gain. Cassman explained that just as good Samaritans and hoarders allow their number of animals to get out of hand, so can backyard breeders.

While this situation might seem unusual, the director of Clay County Animal Control and Care, Christina Sutherin, said this case might be more normal than most think.

"There's a lot more people in situations like this than we want to think," said



The unidentified woman who surrendered 36 pets on Jan. 10 to Clay County Animal Care and Control, including the dog at right, wrote a letter saying goodbye to her 'babies' before officials took custody of the pets.

Sutherin. "The problem is they either don't want to admit that they need help or they are terrified of animal control."

Sutherin wants people to understand that animal control isn't an entity to be



afraid of though. She said Clay County Animal Control and Care only loses four percent of its animals to euthanasia.

She attributes this success to not only the support of the county, but the volun-

teer groups ready to help, such as Friends of Clay County Animals. Known as FOCCA, the nonprofit is an advocacy group that helps Clay County Animal Control and Care where the county can't.

In this instance, FOCCA is paying to board some of these animals taken in as the shelter has reached its capacity. Its member volunteers are also providing any extra help, such as food and medication.

"We formed for situations like this," said Cassman. "We rely on donations to keep this going."

"When you donate to us, you're actually donating to the Clay County Animal Control," she continued.

Despite being brought to full capacity after the rescue, Sutherin is happy that they were able to save and enhance the lives of 36 animals.

She doesn't see the owner of the animals as a villain, but rather someone who made the right decision by calling animal control.

"She knew her capacity had reached an end and that's why she reached out," said Sutherin. "When they reach out, it's our job to come to their aid, which is why we do what we do."

Doctor

from page 1

Clay County to receive certification. At this writing, he is the only physician certified to prescribe the drug.

Doctor's must complete an online eight-hour training course, pass an exam and pay a \$999 fee to acquire the proper certification to recommend the medication.

Florida voters overwhelmingly passed the Amendment 2 ballot initiative to expand the use of medical marijuana on the Nov. 8 general election. More than 350 Florida doctors have qualified since.

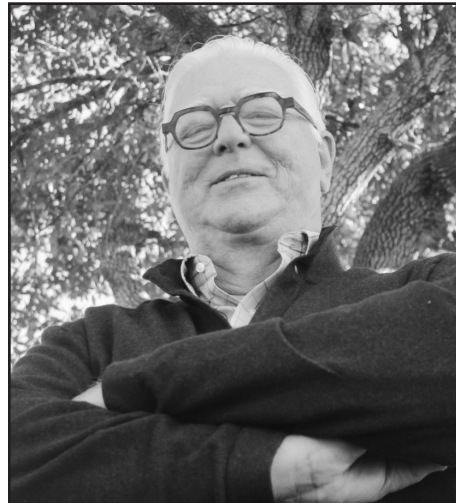
"When the opportunity came along to become a recommender for medical marijuana, I looked into that as a possible opportunity to make humanitarian use of my license, which hangs on my wall, and for the past six years, was just hanging there and not doing anything," Siegers said.

Siegers retired from practice in Michigan, yet has maintained his physician's license in both Michigan and Florida. He has since worked as a medication assessor for Texas-based healthcare company CensoHealth.

In that role, he visits with mostly elderly patients at their homes and reviews their medications only to find that many of the conditions the patients lived with could be remedied by medical marijuana.

This could ultimately reduce or even eliminate the cadre of pills some elderly patients take, he said.

"My interest in that became more acute during a time of visiting elderly people with chronic diseases in their homes and seeing that there are a number of those patients who would, in fact, benefit from access and use of medical marijuana," Siegers said. "Many of the diagnoses that are on the list that would qualify them for the use of med-



Calvin Siegers, M.D., of Fleming Island has been certified to recommend patients for medical marijuana.

ical marijuana, for example, neurological diseases cancer, chronic pain."

With the passage of Amendment 2, the list of patients who qualify for medical marijuana expand to those with "debilitating illnesses" such as post-traumatic stress syndrome, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy and cancer, including a number of other diseases that Siegers said affect many of the patients he sees.

Alternatively, Siegers said, many of these conditions are treated with opioids, which leads to high addiction rates among the elderly even after the pain has been alleviated.

"It's more than minimal, there are a significant number of patients that find themselves in that situation," Siegers said. "The pain is gone but they enjoy the feeling they get as a side effect of the pain medication."

A December study by a Washington Post Kaiser Family Foundation Poll found nearly all long-term users of prescription painkillers say they started the painkill-

ers with a prescription from a doctor. Only three percent of users reported that they started using painkillers for recreational purposes, and while nearly all long-term users reported they used the drug to relieve pain, 34 percent reported being physically dependent on the drug.

"It's not at all uncommon for patients that have a legitimate need for opiate medication at least in the short term to have prescriptions provided to them for that legitimate use," Siegers said. "Over that relatively short period of time, say, a month or six weeks ...the pain component of their needs has diminished considerably, but there becomes a psychological side effect for them that they find desirable to continue with."

He continued to say medical marijuana, while it does have an addictive component to it, can be used instead of opiates in many cases.

Many patients waiting for the medicine to hit the market will have to wait. While Amendment 2 came into effect Jan. 3, Florida Department of Health, physicians, dispensing organizations and patients remain bound under the 2014 "Charlotte's Web" bill while FDOH creates regulations and then implements those regulations. The department has 15 months to complete the task.

Even then, patients must have a "bona fide relationship with a qualified doctor for at least 90 days, so, the big change, which is access, occurs...you would still have to wait through another three months with a qualified doctor who would say 'yes this is a person who qualifies for the use of medical marijuana,'" Siegers said.

Many Florida municipalities and counties have passed temporary moratoria on medical marijuana dispensaries to allow time to devise proper zoning laws for dis-

pensaries when they come. And they're coming.

Alachua-based CHT Medical, announced Dec. 21 that it has received authorization from FDOH's Office of Compassionate Use to process and dispense medical marijuana. The company is one of six licensed dispensing organizations for medical marijuana in the state.

The company has plans to expand its marijuana cultivation operations and open chain dispensaries in every major metropolitan area in Florida.

Siegers believes legislators are not prepared to "let the cat out of the bag" yet.

"The electorate believed that cat was legitimate marijuana usage," he said. "The legislature and the politicians...they've got the bag, and there's a cat in it, but they're afraid that the cat that's in the bag is 'Reefer Madness,'" he said, referring to the 1936 propaganda film of the same name that portrayed marijuana as capable of compelling teenagers to murder, commit sexual assault and go insane.

"The people have spoken clearly on that issue and the legislature is going to fully and faithfully enforce that," said Sen. Rob Bradley [R-Fleming Island] "People that need medical marijuana for those ailments that are described in the Constitution, there is going to be a safe and secure system to get them the product they need."

Bradley sponsored the 2014 "Charlotte's Web" bill that allowed terminal patients access to low-THC medical marijuana.

In the meantime, while the legislature puts the final additions on its regulatory system, Siegers hopes to affiliate himself with a hospice or other palliative care service to give the elderly access to additional care options that include medical marijuana.

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Spring Park

from page 2

a metal roof, as well as a concessions area, splash park, activity area, wheelchair-accessible ramps and new restrooms.

"You can finally start to see stuff coming out of the ground," Null said. "Around the spring head, we've got the concrete base, so we're bringing that up from the ground. For the outflow, where the water flows into Spring Run, we'll be pouring the base this week.

"Inside the building, the plumbing is done and some of the other interior works is done. Within three or four weeks, we're hoping to be able to shut the pumps off, which will make things quiet for the neighbors."

Spring Park was a major tourist attraction and economic boon for Green Cove Springs in the early 20th century, drawing people from around the country and featuring a nearby luxury hotel. Today, city officials expect the refurbished park to attract retailers and spur economic growth.

"I walk by the park every day, and it looks great," said Mayor Pamela Lewis, who lives nearby. "It's going to be beautiful."

In other action Tuesday, the City Council renewed the contract of City Manager

Danielle Judd. She will receive a salary increase (which includes changes to pension contributions and car and phone allowances) from \$113,988 to \$124,727.



Danielle Judd

Judd became city manager in January 2011. She previously worked for the City of Alachua. She is a 1986 graduate of the University of Florida, where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science.

Also on Tuesday, the council accepted a report of decibel readings from three locations near the Green Cove Dragway on Dec. 18 of last year. The dragway, which has been the source of neighborhood noise complaints, was found to be in compliance with the city's noise ordinance at two of the three locations.

The Green Cove Springs Police Department will continue to do readings each month and update the council.

Email Christiaan DeFranco at chris@opcfla.com. Follow him on Twitter @cdefranco.

College Update

Columbia College Dean's List released

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Eleven students from Clay County were recently named to the Columbia College Dean's List for the Fall Semester that ended in December.

Danielle K. Lindsay and Wallace J. Paschal, both of Fleming Island; Ayatola G. Eureste of Green Cove Springs; Middleburg residents Colleen D. Bell, Montrelle M. Brown, Morgan R. Golden, Tammy D. Sanchez and Paula A. Tukes; and Orange Park residents Chelsey M. Bardroff, Robert S. Bardroff and Christina L. Nelson were all named to the Dean's List.

Founded in 1851 in Columbia, Missouri, Columbia College is a private, nonprofit, liberal arts and sciences institution that offers small classes, experienced faculty and quality educational programs at more than 30 locations across the U.S. Columbia College has a campus at 7077 Bonneval Rd. in Jacksonville and another on base at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

Shorter University announces fall 2016 Dean's List

ROME, Ga. – A student from Middleburg was among the many named to the Fall 2016 Dean's List at Shorter University.

Courtney Bach, a sophomore, qualified by being enrolled full time and having earned at least a 3.5 grade point average for the term.

Founded in 1873, Shorter University is a Christian university committed to excellence in education. Annually ranked as a best Southeastern college by the Princeton Review, Shorter offers traditional bachelor's degrees in 40 areas of study, online courses and degree programs, undergraduate programs for working adults, and master's degrees.

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Team

from page 1

Board Chair Janice Kerekes, also worked on Davis' campaign. Davis thanked him in his victory speech on election night.

All the salary figures include benefits, which are 25 percent of each salary.

In regard to the hiring of Michael Kerekes, Davis said in a statement: "Please know that his hiring, along with other current or future hires, is based on ability, skill set, intellect, and willingness to transform the organization.

"All new and existing hires will be held accountable to perform at a high level and be required to consistently represent and reflect the core values of the district and school board."

Michael Kerekes, as of a Wednesday morning publication deadline, did not return repeated calls from Clay Today and chose not to respond to questions via email.

Janice Kerekes told Clay Today that her son's hiring wasn't something she saw coming.

"It's a decision that's 100-percent up to the superintendent," she said. "Michael is bright and he's driven. Of course, I'm biased because I'm his mother, but he's very qualified. I was surprised when he told me



he was set to do an interview for the position. I was not involved in this process at all."

Board member Ashley Gilhousen, who has held opinions opposing Chairwoman Kerekes on many issues since taking office in 2014, discussed the hiring with Clay Today.

"The statutes are pretty clear that when the superintendent takes office, he or she

can hire whom they want," Gilhousen said.

When directly asked about the hiring of Kerekes' son, Gilhousen said, "I'm not going to comment on that right now."

Board member Betsy Condon, who often has been aligned with Gilhousen, said she is willing to give Davis the leeway to hire whomever he chooses.

"I feel very strongly that it's in the purview of the superintendent to hire his or her staff," she said.

In relation to his hiring choices in general, Davis told the board members at the

Jan. 5 meeting: "If, in 30 days, you feel that someone isn't the right person, I'm giving you the opportunity to call me, and we'll have that conversation.

"I've hired at the 20th-largest district ... very successful people. I know what first-round draft picks are."

Several board members had heard concerns from constituents.

Other new hires Davis made were: Kathleen "Katie" Moeller, director of professional development, school improvement and assessment who currently serves as the director of leadership development for Duval

County Public Schools. In that position, Moeller helped to create and grow the DCPS administrator leadership bench, according to a press release. She developed the

curriculum for the assistant principal preparation program and helped establish New

Leaders as the School Principalship preparation program for principals.

Michael Kemp, who is currently serving as assistant superintendent for information services in the Bibb County, Georgia School District, is to be named as the new assistant superintendent of operations. Kemp, who holds a doctorate in education, began his education career as a teacher at Jacksonville's Arlington Middle school in August 1989. His salary will be \$127,000. He will replace John Merrill, the assistant superintendent for support services, who will be retiring in a month.

SEE TEAM, 25

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This Week in History

5 Years Ago, 2012

• After months of discussion and a moratorium, the county commission approved two ordinances to regulate electronic gaming centers and adult arcades – internet cafes. Both passed 4-1 with Commissioner Ronnie Robinson voting no on the regulatory ordinance and Commissioner Doug Conkey voting no on the zoning ordinance.

• The Orange Park Police Department charged Janet Lee Plourde with manslaughter for the 2001 drug overdose death of Teresa Elaine Bowater. Police Chief James Boivin said Bowater overdosed on illegal drugs Plourde gave her and then drowned in Plourde's bathtub.

• The Clay County School District applauded state grades given by the Florida Department of Education. Each of the county's high schools received A grades with the exception of Orange Park High, which earned a B.

10 Years Ago, 2007

• The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Ralph Javier Muma, 48, of Orange Park and charged him with murder in the shooting death of his neighbor, Ralph Forehand Jr., 43.

• Students walking through the woods heading home from school found human skeletal remains in a ravine near Wells Road. The Clay County Sheriff's Office cordoned off the area and treated it as a crime scene.

• What Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies described as a drive-by shooting at Club Christopher's on Wells Road resulted in the arrest of Quinton Bernard Glover of Jacksonville.

20 Years Ago, 1997

• School Superintendent David Owens urged school board members to agree to a plan to halt construction of new junior high "M" targeted for Lake Asbury and instead, consider building a new high school in its place.

• The Florida Highway Patrol said no criminal charges would be filed in connection with a vehicle accident that killed two cyclists and seriously injured two others the day after Christmas 1996. Margaret

Raynal, 31, and Douglas Hill, 47, both of Gainesville, were killed in the crash.

• The Judicial Nominating Commission for the Fourth Judicial Circuit re-appointed Orange Park attorney Larry Smith of Head, Metcalf, Aguilar, Moss, Sieron, Perritt and Myers. The Commission also appointed Orange Park attorney Brooke Caplin of law firm Janan Bateh.

30 Years Ago, 1987

• An investigation into spending at Orange Park Middle School found school funds had been misused for at least two years, including payments made to the custodian's daughter who did not work at the school. Principal Tom Moore and custodian Samuel Sprout were suspended during the investigation.

• The 1st District Court of Appeal granted a new trial for Wayne Ortagus of Middleburg who was convicted of manslaughter for the shooting death of Ferman Ellis Fowler saying the lower court erred in the sentencing guidelines.

• Bus drivers who were members of the Clay County Educational Support Personnel union asked Clay County School Superintendent Ann Wiggins to remove a prayer on the back of a mandatory form citing separation of church and state, however Wiggins said the prayer would stay.

40 Years Ago, 1977

• Dan Thatcher, developer for The Springs, said he planned to ask Orange Park Town Council if his company can annex 23 acres into the town so the homes could be hooked up with water and sewer services.

• Capitalizing on the excitement of the Bicentennial Celebration held the previous summer, the Clay County Chamber of Commerce planned to hold Clay Festival '77 at the Orange Park Kennel Club March 11-13.

• Sue Pike, Diana Snyder and Pat Casper, clerks at Jacksonville law firms, began a petition drive to ensure the Jacksonville Flyer of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority would not end service due to budget cuts after Gene Buzard, county transportation authority chairman, said the county ran out of money.



Vipers work to save the baby sea turtles

ORANGE PARK – They may be called the Vipers, but the robotics team from Clay Virtual Academy is anything but harmful. Students have been awarded for a unique idea the team came up with about how to save baby sea turtles. The team comprised of, from left, Lukas DeMola, Lilly Stansberry, robotics coach Carol Cochuyt, Dylan Pierce, Vinny Ward and Viktorya Bradford, won first place at the Robo Thrasher 2 Robotics Competition, held at the Thrasher-Horne Conference Center on Jan. 5. Students created a bracelet that helps people remember which months to turn off their beachfront lights so baby sea turtles can head out to sea and grow up instead of being confused by the added lighting. Bracelets cost 10-cents each and are made with small rubber bands that are readily available. Their idea exemplifies the First Lego League Robotics Competition's mission "to change the world one idea at a time."

CITY OFFICES CLOSED FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Offices of the City of Green Cove Springs will be closed on Monday, January 16, 2017 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

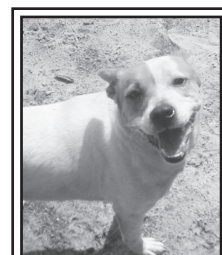
In case of an emergency, please call 297-7300.

There will be **NO GARBAGE OR YARD WASTE PICK-UP ON MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2017.**

Garbage and Yard Waste collection will resume on your next scheduled day.



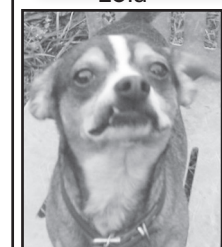
City of Green Cove Springs, Florida



Lola

Lola is a Blue Heeler mix, around 2 years old, and one smart girl. She loves a run in the yard, meeting people, and getting some good rub time. Lola is spayed, up to date on her shots, micro chipped, and on monthly heart worm, flea and tick preventatives. She is house broken, and loves to tease the other dogs in the nearby kennels. She's a joker – you can see it in her eyes, the fun she has with you! But when she gets to know you, she offers you love, loyalty, and total dedication. She's great with people and has lots of energy, for one person, or a family. Email info@animalrescuemovement.org for more information, or check our website, <http://www.animalrescuemovement.org> to meet Lola and our other dogs and cats. Call the shelter also, and leave a message – we'll get back to you as soon as possible – at (904)282-7888. She is so ready to be a part of your family!

For more info, volunteer or donations call 282-7888



Lil Bit

Lil Bit is a Chihuahua mix, a sweet, happy boy, full of love and life. He's three years old, neutered, up to date on all shots and micro chipped. He loves playing 'racetrack' in the play yard, and then jumps in your lap. Lil Bit is great with other small dogs, and kids and adults. He walks well on a leash, loves going for rides, and does really well in a crate. Meet him and fall in love --he's such a wonderful dog. Email info@animalrescuemovement.org for more information, or check our website, <http://www.animalrescuemovement.org> to meet our Lil Bit, and our other dogs and cats. Call the shelter also, and leave a message – we'll get back to you as soon as possible – at (904)282-7888. He is ready to be a part of your family!

If you are interested in adopting a pet, please fill out our online application at www.animalrescuemovement.org. (Click on the adoptions tab to the left.)

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Police Briefs

2-vehicle crash ends in serious injury

BRADFORD COUNTY – The Florida Highway Patrol reports that a two-vehicle accident in Bradford County ended in serious injury for a Keystone Heights man.

Police said John Jordan, 48, was driving a 2012 Hyundai Elantra northbound on U.S. Highway 301 in the left center lane near Centennial Fireworks at a high rate of speed passing other vehicles in a 45 mile per hour construction zone.

Police said when Jordan failed to maintain a safe and legal distance from a 2010 Buick Enclave, Jordan rear ended the Buick, which was driven by Maegan Prince, 27, of Starke.

FHP said Prince was also headed northbound when the crash took place. Upon impact, Jordan's vehicle ended up facing in a westerly direction, while Prince's vehicle ended up in the median facing north.

Jordan was airlifted to UF Health hospital in Gainesville and was treated for serious injuries. He was also charged with careless driving. Prince was not injured, but a passenger in her car, Chad Rath, 27, of Starke, received minor injuries.

Investigation continues in inmate impersonating inmate

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels continues to look into how an inmate impersonated another inmate and was released from the jail on Monday. Jessica Arnott, 28, of Green Cove Springs, left the jail for an hour and half on Jan. 9. She now faces additional charges of escape and grand theft.



Jessica Arnott

There is currently a strong policy for the release of inmates. But, Sheriff Daniels is calling for a more intense look at policies and procedures.

"I am incensed that this occurred and necessary discipline will be administered. There appears to have been a procedural breakdown based on human factor," said Daniels, in a press release. "Instead of creating an environment of establishing blame, I will set up an environment where this does not occur again."

Inmate Jessica Davis was set to be released on bond Monday. Instead, Arnott went through the releasing process, posing as Davis, and left the Clay County Jail.

Davis' mother saw Arnott in her daughter's clothing at the intersection of Gratio Place and Walnut Street in Green Cove Springs and then reported Arnott to police who then returned her to the jail.

Daniels said an internal investigation is underway to determine how the switch happened.

Arnott was originally arrested on Nov.

14 on one charge of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon after she allegedly struck a victim with a machete. She had remained in jail since her arrest where her bond was set at \$25,003.

Assault and battery charge for Green Cove man

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A Green Cove Springs man faces charges of aggravated assault, aggravated battery and armed burglary after an alleged incident with his neighbor.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Leland Peck, 39, on Jan. 9 at 10:39 p.m. after a report of an aggravated battery that had taken place led officers to a house located in Green Cove Springs.



Leland Peck

The report said Peck knocked on the victim's door, and when the victim answered, Peck pointed a revolver in the victim's face and asked him where his girlfriend was. When Peck pointed the gun at the victim's face, the victim took a step back, only to be shoved to the ground by Peck, police said. Peck began searching the house for his girlfriend. The victim said he didn't know why Peck was looking for his girlfriend at his house.

When officers arrived at the scene, they cuffed Peck's hands and put him in the back of a patrol car while the investigation took place. After seeing the victim moving around aggressively while in the patrol car, the officer opened the back door to check on Peck. Upon doing so, Peck allegedly pushed the officer back and attempted to jump out of the car. The officer apprehended Peck and placed him back in the car.

During the struggle, the officer noticed a piece of trim from the car that had broken off during his attempted escape. This struggle added the potential charges of battery on a law enforcement officer and destruction of Clay County property being added to the arrest.

Peck was arrested and booked into the Clay County Jail where, at press time, he remained held without bond.

Keystone man charged with forgery

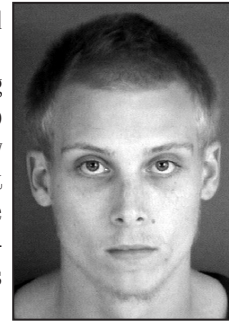
GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A Keystone Heights man faces a charge of forgery after turning himself in five days after a warrant was issued for his arrest.

James Lay, 18, turned himself in on Jan. 9 at 3:02 p.m. at the Clay County Sheriff's Office headquarters on Orange Avenue in Green Cove Springs.

On Dec. 5 of last year, at 6 p.m., Lay attempted to purchase \$5 worth of gas using a counterfeit \$20 bill at a Keystone Heights

Kangaroo gas station, according to the police report. A Kangaroo employee found the bill suspicious based on how the bill looked and felt.

After comparing the counterfeit bill to photos of previously used counterfeit bills, police said, she noticed that the serial number on this bill matched the serial number of a bill used two days prior.



James Lay

The Kangaroo employee notified Lay, "who promptly left the premises," states the police report.

On Dec. 28, Lay was pulled over during a traffic stop in which deputies notified detectives working on the case.

On Jan. 3, 2017, police spoke with Lay by phone and asked him if he would meet to discuss the allegation. Six days later, Lay turned himself in.

Lay was charged with "uttering a forged bill or note" and has a bond set at \$5003.

Running red light results in four car crash

MIDDLEBURG – Seven people were hospitalized Tuesday when a Ford Expedition driven by a teenager allegedly ran a red light and struck a Hyundai Accent at the intersection of County Road 220 and Knight Boxx Road.

According to the Florida Highway Patrol report, John H. Tiederman III, 16, travelled westbound on CR 220 in the right hand lane with two other teenagers in his vehicle. A white Hyundai Accent travelled eastbound and attempted to make a left turn onto Knight Boxx Road at 6 p.m. on Jan. 10.

A witness saw Tiederman allegedly run the red light and strike the passenger side of the Hyundai Accent, where a 14-year-old Orange Park girl sat.

Tiederman's vehicle then rolled over onto its driver's side and continued to travel into a silver Ford Aerostar and a Toyota MR2 on Knight Boxx Road in the right turn lane to CR 220.

All drivers and passengers with the exception of the driver of the Toyota were transported to local hospitals with injuries ranging from serious to minor.

Two teenagers face grand theft charges

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Two teenagers face grand theft auto charges after a response to a suspicious vehicle yielded a reported stolen vehicle.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Jacob Eron Brown, 18, of Green Cove Springs and Daniel Antwan Clark, 19, of Jacksonville on Jan. 10 after complaints of a suspicious vehicle led deputies to the two teenagers allegedly hiding a closet.

Deputies made contact with a resident on the 600 block of SW Jasmine Avenue, who said a suspicious vehicle had parked on the side of her residence. Upon arrival, deputies discovered the license plate matched a vehicle reported stolen. The vehicle ID number corroborated the deputies' suspicions.

Deputies made contact with two subjects who hid in a closet and asked Brown to empty his pockets. There, deputies allegedly found a stack of gift cards stolen from inside the vehicle.

Deputies arrested the two teenagers and transported them to the Clay County Sheriff's Office, where Brown remained on a \$55,005 bond for petit theft and Grand Theft Auto while Clark remained on a \$25,003 bond.

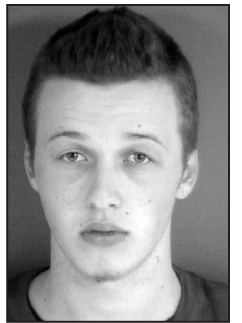
Jacksonville woman arrested for insurance fraud at Orange Park Medical Center

ORANGE PARK – A Jacksonville woman has been arrested over alleged insurance fraud involving false Orange Park Medical Center claims that resulted in \$9,425 in benefits.

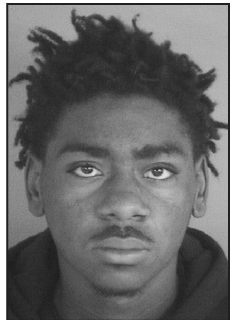
The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Vallarie Lynn Thompson-Wells, 31, on Jan. 9 over allegations that she made fraudulent insurance claims using names of doctors from Orange Park Medical Center.

According to the arrest warrant, Thompson-Wells received insurance through AFLAC. A claims specialist became suspicious of her activity in early October after a claim she submitted for her son Tobias closely mirrored a claim for her other son Tristan.

The case was transferred to an AFLAC special investigator who discovered Orange Park Medical Center had no record of either incident in its billing department. The case was transferred to the Florida Department of Financial Services Bureau of Insurance who then launched an investigation. Interviews with doctors listed



Jacob Brown



Daniel Clark



Vallarie Lynn Thompson-Wells

Arrests & Bookings

Tuesday, January 10

Arnott, Jessica, 28, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Escape, Grand Theft \$300-4,999
 Brock, Steven, 35, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Non-Support, Resisting an Officer
 Brown, Jacob, 18, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Grand Theft Auto, Petit Theft
 Byrne, Jasmine, 22, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery, Resisting an Officer
 Carney, Andrew, 39, Middleburg, CCSO, Habitual Traffic Offender
 Carter, Jacob, 21, Jacksonville, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Clark, Daniel, 19, Jacksonville, CCSO, Grand Theft Auto
 Daly, Ryan, 32, Middleburg, CCSO, Burglary, Two Counts Each of Giving False Info to a Pawn Broker and Dealing Stolen Property
 Detlaff, Mark, 52, Orange Park, CCSO, Trespassing
 Gentry, Chantal, 39, Orange Park, CCSO, VOP - Parent Failing to Require Children to Attend School
 Hale, Charles, 66, Middleburg, CCSO, Failing to Stop and Remain at a Crash Involving Injury to Others
 Hodges, Melina, 42, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, VOP - Reckless Driving
 Howell, Timothy, 58, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 James, Jessica, 21, Fleming Island, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Jones, Paul, 42, Orange Park, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court
 Koch, Nicklaus, 22, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Lyons, Brandon, 20, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Burglary
 Mitchell, Eddie, 30, Jacksonville, CCSO, Non-Support
 Simcox, Timothy, 55, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR

Tate, Dustin, 36, Middleburg, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Theberge, Ryan, 31, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Disorderly Intoxication, Trespassing, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Thomas, Anthony, 45, Orange Park, OPPD, Violate Probation - Community Control, Contempt of Court - Child Support
 Wesson, Samuel, 57, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon, Domestic Battery

Monday, January 9

Beckmann, Michael, 40, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Boyette, Polly, 30, Middleburg, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Cannady, William, 48, Orlando, FHP, Failure to Appear for Court
 Garretson, Tyler, 26, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Gorden, Ethan, 18, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Lewd and Lascivious Behavior, Transmitting Harmful Info to Minor
 Harris, Donald, 18, Middleburg, CCSO, Vandalism \$1,000 or More
 Hicks, Lonnie, 50, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, DWLSR
 Jad, Sultan, 18, Jacksonville, CCSO,

Possession of Less Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Knight, Skyler, 18, Middleburg, CCSO, Domestic Battery
 Lay, James, 18, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Forgery
 Peck, Leland, 39, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Aggravated Battery, Burglary, Violence on a Law Enforcement Officer Firefighter or EMT, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon, Criminal Mischief
 Soliz, Nicolas, 32, Riverton, Wyo., CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Thompson-Wells, Vallarie, 31, Jacksonville, CCSO, Insurance Fraud Less Than \$20k
 Vance, Joshua, 28, Middleburg, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control

Sunday, January 8

Barreto, Christine, 39, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Chambers, Alex, Orange Park, CCSO, DUI
 Coleman, Nathan, 31, Jacksonville, GCSPD, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Davis, Jessica, 35, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Battery - Dating Violence
 Diaz, Anthony, 27, Fleming Island, CCSO, Domestic Battery, Vandalism
 Everett, Samantha, 30, Jacksonville, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Howard, Dylan, 22, Jacksonville, OPPD, VOP - Aggravated Assault, DWLSR, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Jones, Julius, 53, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Kaiserling, Stephania, 45, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Parrish Paul, Heather, 39, Fleming Island, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 White, Christian, 26, Middleburg, CCSO, Felony Battery, Domestic Battery

Saturday, January 7

Blakeley, David, 51, Saranac, Mich., CCSO, Simple Battery - Dating Violence
 Crawford, Gregory, 43, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Emejuru, Okechukwu, 27, Jacksonville, OPPD, Driving Without a Valid License
 Johnson, Robert, 42, Jacksonville, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Newman, Michael, 22, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Oleynikov, Lizzette, 28, Orange Park, CCSO, Violate Injunction For Protection
 Sharon, Sean, 46, Satsuma, Fla., OPPD, DWLSR
 Temoney, Alisha, 39, Middleburg, CCSO, Trespassing

Friday, January 6

Allen, Terrence, 20, Jacksonville, CCSO, Trespassing
 Bishop, Steven, 29, Jacksonville, CCSO, VOP - Burglary, Two Counts of VOP - Grand Theft
 VOP - Criminal Use of Personal Information, Two Counts of VOP - Trafficking
 Morphine, Opium, Oxy

Blakeley, David, 51, Saranac, Mich., CCSO, Two Counts of Simple Battery
 Carter, Michael, 29, Jacksonville, CCSO, Simple Battery
 Dixon, Teresa, 48, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR, FTA - No Motor Vehicle Reg
 Grant, Keith, 34, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Harrison, Roxanne, 33, Fleming Island, CCSO, Non-Support
 Hess, Melanie, 27, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Hudzinski, Michael, 31, Jacksonville, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999
 Leach, Kyle, 26, Fleming Island, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court
 Lee, Virginia, 36, Fleming Island, CCSO, DUI
 Moore, Wayne, 31, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR
 Rosenbaum, Jacob, 19, Melrose, CCSO, Aggravated Battery
 Sanders, Devante, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, DWLSR
 Schaffner, Jacob, 35, Middleburg, CCSO, FTA - Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Sommise, Daniel, 23, Jacksonville, CCSO, Domestic Battery, Grand Theft, Two Counts of Criminal Mischief

Thursday, January 5

Bell, Timothy, 36, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Douglas, Neville, 40, Jacksonville, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Greer, Meagan, 31, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Leach, Kyle, 26, Fleming Island, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Mensah, Joshua, 25, Jacksonville, OPPD, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Nettles, Kyle, 20, Jacksonville, CCSO, VOP - Possession of Marijuana With Intent to Sell
 Ocampo, Lea, 21, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Pitts, Lonnie, 42, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR
 Roach, Sean, 42, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR
 Saxton, Shawn, 21, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Driving Without a Valid License
 Stephens, Raeisha, 23, Jacksonville, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court
 Taylor, Cindy, 56, Middleburg, CCSO, Cocaine Possession, Drug Equipment Possession, Introducing or Removing Contraband Into County Jail
 Turner, Mary, 52, Orange Park, CCSO, Marijuana Production

Wednesday, January 4

Bennett, John, 49, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Armed Burglary to Auto, Burglary to Auto, Grand Theft of Firearm
 Bennett, Terrell, 26, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR, Two Counts of Violate Probation - Community Control
 Carlson, Christine, 33, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Crimley, Cedric, 23, Orange Park, GCSPD, Resisting an Officer, Harm Public Servant

Or Family Member, Disorderly Intoxication, Disorderly Conduct
 Damon, Duane, 43, Keystone Heights, CCSO, VOP - Burglary
 Neely, Dayle, 25, Orange Park, CCSO, Driving Without a Valid License
 Patten, Hillman, 23, Orange Park, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Rinders, Donta, 26, Orange Park, CCSO, VOP - Child Abuse
 Robbins, Kenneth, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, Conditional Release Violation
 Schmelzle, Brittany, 29, Penney Farms, OPPD, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Smith, Curt, 36, Middleburg, CCSO, Domestic Battery
 Thomas, Dale, 22, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - Child Abuse
 Wilkinson, Donna, 37, Palatka, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Wilson, Jennifer, 32, Keystone Heights, CCSO, VOP - Possession of a Controlled Substance

Police from page 21

on insurance documents yielded similar results – meritless insurance claims, the report said. Deputies arrested Thompson-Wells and transported her and transported her to the Clay County Jail, where she was later released on an undisclosed bond.

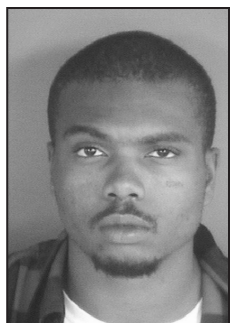
Jacksonville man arrested for drunken disorderly conduct in CVS

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A Jacksonville man was arrested for disorderly conduct last Wednesday after officers responded to reports of a male “unconscious but breathing” in the men’s restroom of the CVS Pharmacy located at 800 North Orange Ave.

Officers with the Green Cove Springs Police Department arrested Cedric Anthony Crimley, 23, on Jan. 4. Allegedly, Crimley had passed out in a CVS bathroom while under the influence of alcohol.

While Clay County Fire Rescue checked Crimley’s health, Crimley allegedly began to raise his voice and use foul language while in the pharmacy. The report said Crimley allegedly ignored those orders and continued, prompting officers to grab Crimley by his left and right arms. The report said Crimley tensed up as if he was going to resist, but didn’t.

Crimley is charged with disorderly intoxication, disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and threatening a public official. His bond was set at \$12,009.



Cedric Crimley

Fleming Island High sending three musicians to All-State ensemble

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – Carson Frank started his music career at four, tapping away at piano keys while his legs dawkled from a stool.

Luke Johnson started with chicken wings, pounding away at tables, desks and bowls – anything he could make a beat on.

“I started playing drums in general when I was just a few months old,” Johnson said. “I would be at my grandmother’s house and I would eat two chicken wings grab the bones and start banging on pots and pans,” Johnson said with a laugh. “I’ve been doing that a long time.”

Now sophomores at Fleming Island High, the two percussionists will perform together Saturday at the Florida All State Concert in Tampa, an event reserved for only the best.

“The All State Conference is made of the best students from all over the state of Florida so the three guys here that made it had to compete with musicians all over the state of Florida to make it...It’s a big deal,” said Mara Rose, Fleming Island High band director.

The school’s band program produced a third All State Band member this year, as well. Trumpeter Matt Gagne, a senior, will play in the band. He has recently been recruited to the Boston Crusaders drum core, a world-class ensemble.

The event takes place at the Tampa Convention Center and is a culmination of years of practice, study and determination.

“My first girl from [Fleming Island High] who was in the All State Band, she went to Paris and studied overseas, came back here and she’s getting her doctorate now in New York,” Rose said. “This is a huge stepping stone for some of these people.”

The event also marks the end of a difficult audition process that ran the gamut of instruments and play styles. To participate in the All State Band, which is divided by grade level, musicians must begin to practice the sheet music and fundamentals in May. Officials announced results Nov. 1.

Auditions for percussionists are more difficult than other specialties due to the sheer number of instruments the musicians must play to show their versatility.

Musicians perform pieces on the timpani, xylophone and snare drum as well as



From left, Luke Johnson and Carson Frank play a xylophone together in the Fleming Island High band room, which is surrounded by trophies, some the size of the instruments themselves.

a sight-reading performance to ensure musicians are quick on their feet. Auditions are submitted to judges in a blind submittal process meant to eliminate any sort of bias.

Their audition is compared against hundreds of other auditions from musicians all over Florida.

“It’s challenging with the multiple instruments you have to play from the multiple kinds of drums and auxiliary instruments instead of just playing one instrument, like a trumpet player, you have to focus and master a wide range of instruments,” Frank said.

“Percussionists are just running around the back of the stage freaking out trying to get to their part and they have to focus on multiple parts at the same time,

so it’s normally almost always a hassle,” Johnson said.

Rose said it’s unusual to have so many high-level musicians in one class. She’s had 13 students go to state in the last nine years she has taught at the school.

However, she knows when she’s found musicians who exemplify the hunger required to go farther than other students.

“They’re much more focused, much more aggressive about it – they’re much more anxious to learn and much more they just learn stuff quicker because they want to get to the next thing,” Rose said.

The Tampa performance will offer the musicians a chance to play in an ensemble with the best musicians in Florida.

Frank and Johnson hope to pursue percussion in college. Certainly, participation

in the All State Band will be a “resume booster” that will elevate them over other submissions.

“I think it’s pretty surreal,” Frank said. “I would take it as an honor being one of the top in the state, especially competing against that many people to get a spot. The chances of two alone from one school out of all of the schools in Florida is pretty slim to none.”

Meanwhile, one other Clay County student will perform at the separately same Tampa conference event. Oakleaf Junior High seventh grader Nathan Summers – also a percussionist – was the only Clay County junior high student selected for the 2016-17 All State Middle School Band.

Lunch from page 3

In May of last year, Bennett Elementary and other places in Green Cove Springs were placed on a 5-hour lockdown when 40-year-old Murray Lancaster went on a murder spree. He abducted and shot a former girlfriend, her father, and his ex-wife, the mother of his two children. Lancaster then shot himself in his trailer, which was just blocks away from Bennett Elementary.

Moments prior to his rampage, he stopped at Bennett Elementary to briefly see his kids, who attended school there, and then left. During the shooting spree, while police searched for Lancaster, the school’s 827 students and 100 employees hunkered down in silence and darkness.

“We don’t like to bring up that incident,” Lloyd said. “But we do want to thank people, because they do keep us safe. Our law enforcement and first responders are phenomenal.”

After the ordeal, music teacher Victoria Syken began a #GreenCoveStrong initiative with the students to thank everyone who helped keep them safe.

For Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels, who was sworn in on Jan. 2, events like “Law Enforcement Appreciation Day” highlight a major theme of his campaign of mending fences.

“It’s important for law enforcement to break down psychological barriers of mistrust, even at this age,” Daniels said.

“Some kids are raised to develop a psyche of being afraid of law enforcement. We need to break down the mistrust, and that goes both ways, because sometimes law enforcement can become jaded and they get a false perspective of people.

“It’s about opening communication. We’re all in this together.”

Email Christian DeFranco at chris@opcfla.com. Follow him on Twitter @cdefranco.

Sprouting your garden: growing with seeds

By **Wayne Hobbs**

UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture Agent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – With winter finally feeling like it was upon us in the last week, gardening may be the last thing on some people's minds as they begin the New Year. However, North Florida's winters rarely last long and it is the time of the year to plan your spring garden.

One great way to cheaply and effectively grow your garden and landscape



Wayne Hobbs

is with seeds. Seeds are the reproductive offspring of plants and there is a surprising amount of diversity within their numbers. For every type of plant you would want to grow, there are often numerous varieties of seeds available with some thriving in our climate and others wilting away in the heat.

There are a few key things to look for to ensure you will have an effective garden. First of all, will the variety do well in our climate? Some seeds ordered through catalogs or bought in a store may have been produced in a different region of the country and may not be well suited for Florida. You should also research if it is resistant to major diseases as well as its site needs such as water, soil, fertilization and amount of sunlight.

Some types of seeds to begin indoors this time of year include tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and annual warm-season flowers. Other seeds such as squash, cucumbers, watermelons, sweet corn and beans should be planted directly into the garden when the weather warms.

When starting seeds indoors, they are very much like growing a plant outside as each type of seed will have its own unique set of needs. Seeds may need light or dark, some do well covered, others may be planted deep, and some need to be soaked in water before planting. It all depends on the type of seed being used. There are even some seeds that require scarification, which is when the seed is sandpapered, acid dipped, baked, or even sometimes burned to cause the seed coat to crack and

the seed to germinate. You will need to do a bit of research from reliable sources such as UF/IFAS Extension, other state Extension programs, or from the seed company to ensure success.

Most seeds started indoors do well in a soilless potting media, kept moist. Vermiculite or commercial starting mixes can work well. They can be started and grown to transplant size directly in a pot or can be started in another container with other seeds then transplanted into another container before planting. Following germination, most plants will require a spot with some sunlight to encourage food production and growth. A small greenhouse can be optimum if available but often a warm windowsill will do just fine.

You should also pay attention to the days to transplant for your variety of plant as this will allow you to make sure the plants are not too young to survive the stress of transplanting or will grow too old and large for its container.

Once the danger of frost leaves, usually in February, many spring vegetables can be put into the garden. If planted at this time, most will be ready for a late spring harvest and will avoid the heat of the summer when you should consider solarizing your garden with clear plastic to attempt to kill pests and weeds. Not many vegetables will thrive under the full force of a Florida summer.

You can also save seeds from some types of produce and landscape plants for planting but in some cases the seeds will have the same characteristics as the parent plant or may carry disease. Some plants also are sterile and the seeds will not germinate at all. Remember that germination rates drop the longer the seed is stored so older seed will likely produce less sprouts than newly collected seed.

A great resource is the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide that is available online through the University of Florida and in print at the UF/IFAS Clay County Extension Office as it lists many good varieties, planting recommendations, and timing for planting and harvest. It can also be found at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>.

If you are interested in learning more about seeds and how to start them for your spring garden, consider coming to a workshop entitled "Sprouting: Growing Your Garden With Seeds" at the UF/IFAS Clay County Extension Office on Jan. 23 from 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$18 if you pre-pay and register at www.eventbrite.com or \$20 at the door. You will receive seeds and supplies to start your garden from this workshop.

If you have any more questions about seeds, any other landscape and garden topics, or need plant or pest materials identified, contact the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Office online at <http://www.clay.ifas.ufl.edu>, follow us on Facebook, or call by phone at (904) 284-6355.

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MEDICAL CENTER

Team

from page 19

Michael McAuley will be named the new position of assistant superintendent of climate and culture for an annual salary of \$137,500, is another point of emphasis for Davis. McAuley has been in education for more than 20 years, and has worked at every level from elementary school extended-day counselor to university instructor, from district-based school psychologist to international lecturer. He has also served as a pre-service education program train-

er to state and school district executive director. The focus of McAuley's work over the past eight years has been to support the growth and development of systems involved with continuous improvement and the outcomes for all stakeholders, including students, teachers and district support teams, states a press release.

"The biggest thing Clay County can focus on is the well-being of our staff, attention to strategies, our support services, exceptional student education, psychologists," Davis said Dec. 15. "We really need to change our dynamics to focus on positive support versus being reactive. In this

position, I want someone who really understands our school improvement model to gain access to our kids and train our teachers to be successful with them."

Theresa Stahlman will be the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Stahlman, who has a doctorate, is currently serving as principal of Ruth N. Upson Elementary in Jacksonville's Murray Hill community. No info was given for this salary.

While at the Duval County School District, Stahlman served in different roles, including regional superintendent where she was responsible for leading and moni-

toring school reform and improvement in 35 schools serving approximately 35,000 students in grades K-12.

She was the first leadership development director at the Schultz Center for Teaching and Learning responsible for developing standards-based leadership curriculum for all principals.

Managing Editor Eric Cravey contributed to this story. Email Christiaan DeFranco at chris@opcfla.com. Follow him on Twitter @cdefranco.



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Community Briefs

Fundraiser to benefit Melrose Public Library

MELROSE – The Melrose Library Association presents a Private Camellia Garden Day and Camellia Plant Sale hosted by top American Camellia Exhibitors Chuck and Bev Ritter.

On Jan. 29 from noon until 4 p.m., come enjoy some amazing camellia blooms and great company on a private camellia tour day. There will be demonstrations and handouts presented by camellia experts, complete with camellia gardening tips, a plant sale, silent auction and a cookie and valentine sale. All proceeds benefit the Melrose Public Library.

Admission is \$5 per person. For more information, call (352) 316-5681.

Search on for World War II War Brides

ORANGE PARK – Clay County residents who were married to a U.S. military service member during World War II are encouraged to join a group that meets monthly in Orange Park.

Joan Jones of Keystone Heights organizes the WWII War Brides group and fears many from that era are dying.

"We, are losing our members very fast these days, but of course we are from the

'Greatest Generation' 1940s and so many of us are in our 80s and 90s," Jones said. "However, I do know that there are still some of us around that could be members of our NE Florida Chapter."

The group will meet Jan. 21 at noon at the Orange Buffet restaurant, 475 Blanding Blvd. for what Jones says is "no meetings, just talk."

For more information contact Joan Jones, (904) 894-8411.

Author to discuss "Civil War & Clay County"

PENNEY FARMS – The author who wrote "An Early History of Clay County- A Wilderness That Could Be Tamed" is presenting a program on the Civil War at the January meeting of the Penney Farms Historical Society.

Author Kevin Hooper will discuss "Clay County and the Civil War," a presentation gleaned from 20 years of researching and writing about the history of Clay County. His articles have appeared in a variety of academic and general history publications and he is recognized as an excellent account of Clay County history and a wonderful resource for historians and students, alike.

The presentation will be held in the

Penney Farms Town Hall, 4100 Clark Ave. at 7 p.m. on Jan. 19.

Free and open to the public.

Anne Frank exhibit comes to Jacksonville

JACKSONVILLE – Jacksonville's Museum of Science and History is bringing the traveling Anne Frank exhibit to Jacksonville as part of its Voices of Hope community initiative. The exhibit will run from Jan. 13 to Feb. 12 and for the first time in MOSH's 70-year history, museum admission will be free so as many people as possible can see the exhibit.

To support this exhibit, San Marco BookStore is partnering with MOSH in several ways:

Each Thursday during the exhibit, San Marco Books will host readings of children's Holocaust books at our bookstore. Recommended for ages 10 and up.

Jan. 12 at 4 p.m. Reading from the Diary of Anne Frank

Jan. 19 at 4 p.m. Reading from Night by Elie Wiesel

Jan. 26 at 4 p.m. Reading from Hana's Suitcase by Karen Levine

Feb. 2 at 4 p.m. Reading from Run, Boy, Run by Uri Orlev

Feb. 9 at 4 p.m. Reading from The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyer

Jan. 28 at 7 p.m., MOSH is hosting author James Grymes, author of *Violins of Hope*. Grymes will be interviewing Amnon Weinstein who has restored more than 30 Holocaust-era violins. A summary of the book is below.

One of the highlights of this exhibit will be on Jan. 28 when the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra will feature 16 of the restored Holocaust violins at 8 p.m. The *Violins of Hope* book will also be available that evening.

University of North Florida Camp Composition Aids Local School Students

JACKSONVILLE – Clay County students who may be struggling with writing are invited to a camp at the College of Education and Human Services at the University of North Florida.

The annual Camp Composition is a writing camp to aid fourth- through 11th-graders to earn higher Florida Standards Assessments English language arts and writing scores. It will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, beginning Saturday, Jan. 21, and running through Saturday, Feb. 25, in Tom and Betty Petway Hall, Building 57, on the UNF campus.

Camp Composition will be led by local lead area teachers who specialize in writing instruction in grades four through 11. These teachers will work with specific writing teams and will provide weekly feedback to each individual student. Stress-reduction strategies will also be taught to students by an expert.

Camp orientation is from 6 to 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20, in Tom and Betty Petway Hall, Room 1100A, where the camp schedule and room assignments will be shared with participants. A completed form and registration fee of \$240 is required; space is limited. Scholarships will be offered on a limited basis to students who qualify for free or reduced lunch and/or attend a Title 1 school. These students would attend at no cost. Confirmation from the school is required, and a reduced fee is also available for siblings. No refunds will be offered after Friday, Jan. 13.

For more information, visit http://www.unf.edu/coehs/celt/Camp_Composition.aspx or contact Dr. Christine L. Weber, UNF associate professor in the Department of Childhood Education, Literacy and TESOL, at (904) 620-1754 or at cweber@unf.edu.

Talk with a Doc



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Takaya Jones, MD

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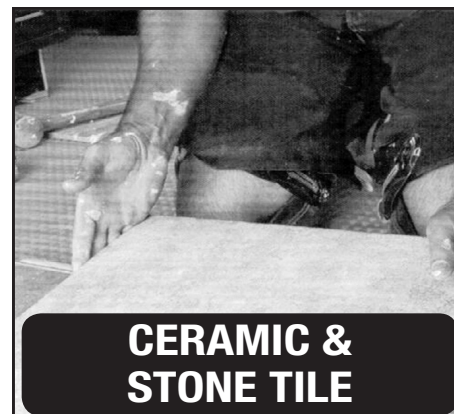
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TODAY'S Sports

Clay Today | Thursday, January 12, 2017 | claytodayonline.com



Three set for sixth-ring soccer run

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – With an unprecedented sixth consecutive state title and an even more unprecedented seventh state title in the mix, three of St. Johns Country Day School's top players for 2016; juniors Payton Crews, Abbey Newton and Alisa Detlefsen, all take a calm, reserved approach to their task at hand.

"Honestly, I think it's not different with these three as the previous players who have come before them," said St. Johns Country Day School coach Mike Pickett. "Everyone wants to leave a legacy when they leave and this year and, in past year, the players don't want to be the team that lets the program down."

Letting the program down; meaning not dominating from start to finish, not pushing through the upcoming district and region playoff slate with apparent ease and then peaking perfectly in the state rounds with their usual uncanny finish has been

SEE SPARTANS, 34



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

St. Johns Country Day School's trio of juniors – Payton Crews, Abbey Newton and Alisa Detlefsen – are on track for a sixth straight Class 1A soccer title for the Spartans.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY TERI BRIGGS

Fleming Island High sophomore Briar Jackson has emerged as a legit 3A threat at 106 pounds with Lake Mary title win.

Jackson, Smenda win Ron Peters' titles

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

LAKE MARY – Fleming Island High wrestling put two more names on the state list probables with sophomore Briar Jackson and junior Ryan Smenda coming home with championship trophies from the highly-charged Ron Peters Tournament of Champions wrestling invitational held Friday and Saturday at Lake Mary High School.

With the breakout wins for Jackson and Smenda in the tournament that featured team champion Lake Highland Prep (1A champions in 2016 and currently nationally-ranked, with 326.5 points; 3A-power Winter Springs (7th in 3A) with 242.0 points and 3A-Southwest Miami (4th in 3A) with 237.5 points as the top three teams, the Golden Eagles, with 213.0 points, took a strong fourth place finish as one of four teams with 200 or more team points.

Jackson, a state qualifier for 2A-Middleburg last year as a freshman, made the move to Fleming Island this year and has intently upped his game to accommodate the more rugged 3A regime of wrestling with the likes of South Dade, Flagler Palm Coast and Winter Springs.

Last week, at the Osceola Knockout Christmas Tournament, Jackson took

SEE TITLE, 29

Reid wins Cradle of Cancer wrestling title

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

JENSEN BEACH – Ridgeview High wrestler Marcus Reid, Jr., stayed unbeaten at 26-0 with a individual title at the Cradle of Cancer invite Saturday at Jensen Beach High School.

Reid, who was a state third placer for 2A-Orange Park High School last year, beat Malyke Hines, a 30-1 titan from 3A-Osceola High School, 7-5, in the championship match to put his name as a strong state medal candidate for the 2A-Panthers. Hines was third in Class 3A at 106 pounds last year.

Reid torched his side of the bracket with three pins and a 2-1 win over Chris

SEE REID, 29



Unbeaten Ridgeview High wrestler Marcus Reid, Jr., took a Most Outstanding Wrestler title with a 7-5 win over 3A-Osceola's Malyke Hines, a third place state finisher last year.



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Williams girls hit the gym for final district run prep

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

BARTRAM TRAIL – A notable statistic improvement in January of 14 free throws made in 20 attempts in contrast to a disastrous six of 21 in December is what Fleming Island High girls basketball coach Joey Williams hopes will be the vital statistic this week.

“That was a terrible game; six for 21 at the free throw and 16 of 50 from the field against Creekside in December,” said Williams. “After that game, we woke up and got going from there.”

Against Creekside High, in the lone loss of their season, a 51-41 district match on December 6, Fleming Island could not hit the broad side of the proverbial barn in the key 4-8A matchup that promises to be just as critical on January 11 when Creekside hosts Fleming Island in the final district match of the season prior to the district tournament.

Williams cited the Ragle sisters, Molly and Clare Ragle, as key improving players plus Lizzie Labas coming in to fuel scoring surges.

“I told the whole team before this game (Bartram Trail January 5, a 42-38 win) that you cannot come into this gym at 14-1 and think you can’t work hard to win,” said Williams. “They were not as focused yesterday in practice.”

Against Bartram Trail, Molly Ragle and Tia Robinson led the scoring with 11 points apiece with Ragle fighting for 12 rebounds also.

In the 4-8A lineup, Creekside, 4-0 in district games with that lone win over Fleming Island, holds on tenuously to the district number one seed despite a 13-5 overall record and losses to Middleburg, Paxon, Providence and Nease, all sub-8A class teams.

Fleming Island, on the flip side, has torched all comers since that January day including a 21-point blowout of Middleburg and a 76-45 smashing of Gainesville Buchholz and heads to Creekside with a 16-1 slate still tops in the area.

On Friday, Fleming Island shredded Buchholz 76-45 with five players in double figures scoring led by Aubrey Burke’s 16 points. Guard Malory Sinsel hit three three pointers as part of her 11 with Molly Ragle getting 12, Labas getting 13 and Robinson getting 12.

“When you practice hard and shoot a ton of shots, you gain confidence in games,” said Williams. “It’s pretty simple that you have to do the work in practice to win games.”

Fleming Island must stay focused with a Tuesday date with a much-improved Oakleaf High team sitting at 2-2 in district play with a tough 8-10 overall record. Oakleaf, the defending district 3-7A champions over Bartram Trail, had a good end of December finish before the Christmas break with a 33-30 win over 3-8A Lee High followed by



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Fleming Island High's Aubrey Burke concentrates on free throws in Golden Eagles' district win over Bartram Trail on Jan. 5. Burke was high scorer in district win over Buchholz two days later. Fleming Island has two more district games, Oakleaf (Jan. 10) and Creekside (Jan. 13). Note: Fleming Island beat Oakleaf 60-41 (17 Pts. Aubrey Burke).



Orange Park High guard Naeyli Williams has helped turn around a slow season start for the Lady Raiders under first-year coach Fred Coles. Orange Park, 3-1 in district 4-6A, has had key wins in second half of season and could make a late district run. Raiders beat Clay 27-23 in clash of 6A teams. Clay has improved to 2-1 in district 5-6A and sits behind Ponte Vedra (4-0) in district lineup.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY DONNA J. CONVERSANO

Middleburg High's sister hoopsters Hannah and Mallory Roney have a January 10 district rematch with Nease High at Middleburg High School. Nease won the first game. Note: Middleburg beat Nease in second game 50-45.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY DONNA J. CONVERSANO
Oakleaf High guard Andrea Merced is fiery leader of young Lady Knights' squad.

a tough 38-36 loss to an even tougher 5A-Raines team (13-4).

Oakleaf coach Frank Jenkins has had his coaching chores pile up with a team that graduated three college-bound all stars and it has not been an easy season for the wily veteran.

“We have slower and younger people this year,” said Jenkins, after beating Lee with just seven available players.

“We need to find the player that wants to fly all over the floor and chase balls. It’s about desire and that’s where we are not right now.”

Oakleaf is led in scoring by freshman Ma’Ria Davis at 12.1 points per game with junior Andrea Merced, an Oakleaf volleyball ace, adding 11.4 points from her guard position. Junior Jalisa Lee adds 7.5 points per game as Jenkins has had to slow down last year’s fast game plan under Daytona State (9-7) guard Destiny Arvinger, averaging 14 points per game, and all stater Jade Lewis, now at Northwest Florida State College (13-2), where she is hitting for 12.4 points per game. The third graduate of that district winning team was center Baileigh Larson, who is a freshman at College of Charleston (5-9) averaging 2.3 points per game, but has 23 rebounds in 11 games.

Oakleaf beat Keystone Heights and Clay, but lost to Fleming Island in holiday play before losses to Fernandina Beach (18-1) and a hot Middleburg team (15-3) in January.

Title

from page 27

fourth to unbeaten South Dade High stalwart Bretli Reyna, but at Lake Mary, Jackson snapped into crush mode with two pins, a major and a final 8-7 win over Ryan Rowland of Hagerty.

"He's learning more and more each week not only wrestling, but being tough," said Fleming Island coach P.J. Cobbert. "That guy had him in a front headlock with Briar up 8-1 and he had to fight back to win that match."

For Smenda, a third place state finisher last year at 182 for coach P.J. Cobbert with teammate Jason Davis also third at 195, the win at his new weight class (195, third at 182 in 2016), with a semifinal win over Region 1-3A rival Jessie Contreras of Winter Springs, is all part of a plan to better the medal count in 2017.

Davis, who was previously unbeaten up to his finals match at 182 (third at 195 in 2016), lost 5-2 to Lake Highland Prep's Bryce Rogers, a two-time 1A state champion (145 in 2015, 160 in 2016) whom Davis beat at the Bill Scott Lyman Invite a month ago. Davis also won at the Osceola Knock-out Tournament last week.

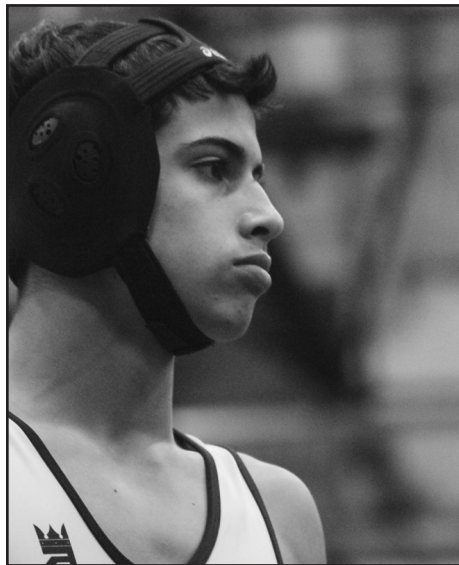
"Jason has to realize that he is a target at any level and he needs to compete all the time on the mat," said Cobbert. "Whether the guy is a state champion or a district champion, they are all looking to beat him. He probably won't wrestle a better guy until state, but he has to stay on his plan."

For Cobbert, the ability to have two different names emerge as title holders shows off the strength of the Golden Eagle lineup.

"Any given day, a guy can get a lucky break and come out on top," said Cobbert, who wrestled without Deandre Demus at 120. "We've been battling with some pretty heavy teams the past couple of weeks and it doesn't get much easier after these tournaments with the Flagler and Clay Rotary events upcoming, and the Clay dual in late January. We want them to wrestle the best guys they can to be ready for the region and state weeks."

One wrestler who has seen maybe enough of the "state's best" is 152 pounder Paul Detwiler who has faced off in two finals matches in the last month against opponents both multiple state champions and both ranked number one in the nation at some point. Detwiler, who has had success on the 3A region and state opponent level with wins over Winter Springs' Dmitri Alicea and South Dade's Todd Perry (Perry beat Detwiler at Osceola), faced off and lost a 15-6 finals match to Lake Highland Prep's Jake Brindley at Lake Mary. Detwiler beat Alicea 7-5 in their semifinal match which should be the region title match in a month.

Against Brindley, who won a state title in 2013 and 2014, was upset in the final in 2015, and returned to win the title in 2016, Detwiler did all he could to not become a fourth straight sub-60 second pin victim of the voracious scrambler. Brind-



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY TERI BRIGGS
Fleming Island High's Jacob Sandoval got to his first finals match and finished second at the Lake Mary Tournament of Champions.

ley had pins of 50 seconds, 27 seconds, 39 seconds and 25 seconds to his finals match with Detwiler.

"Paul still has little bits and pieces to learn about being a dominant wrestler against another dominant wrestler," said Cobbert. "He went toe to toe with both of those guys, but, again, the 3A-Winter Springs guys and 3A-South Dade guys are trying to figure a way to beat him at regions and at state. Artalona and Brindley are both 1A guys, but still the best he'll face this season."

At the Bill Scott tournament against Tampa Prep's two time state champion Anthony Artalona, Detwiler again survived a pin-fest reign to the final match with Artalona winning a 14-4 decision which included Detwiler escaping a cradle hold in the second period. Artalona had pins of 32 seconds, 1:56 and 1:03 before a major decision semifinal win 12-3 over Alicea before facing Detwiler in the final. Ironically, Brindley beat Artalona in last year's 1A title match at 145.

At 126 at Lake Mary, Jacob Sandoval emerged with a second place finish, his best of the season with a loss to Noah Castillo, also of Lake Highland Prep, in his finals match. Castillo was the 1A state champion at 113 beating Clay's Chris Mering in that final last year.

In two third place matches, senior Brandyne Mackey lost a tough 3-2 semifinal match to Winter Springs' Montana Lewis, but rebounded to beat Michael Mireles of Southwest Miami for third place at 220 while, at 285, Jose Concepcion lost his quarterfinal match to Cypress Creek's Uzochi Oparaji in a 29 second pin, but also rebounded to take fourth with a tough 2-1 loss to Christian Gomez of Hagerty. Mireles lost to eventual 220 champion Ben Golden of Lake Highland Prep, the 1A champion at 220, in their semifinal match. Mackey beat Mireles 2-1.

In the 285 final, Winter Springs' T.J. Boyd won over Oparaji by pin with Concepcion beating Lake Highland's Curtis Ruff to move into the consolation final.

Also finishing in the top eight were Vincent Hauser, sixth at 138, and Anthony Breeden, seventh at 170.

Clay wins 1A Scuffle

JENSEN BEACH — Clay High won its third straight 1A Scuffle hosted by Jensen Beach High School on Saturday with individual titles by Lou Gagliardo, Peyton Hughes, Cody Taylor, Keath Sawdo, Justin Merring, Kaleb Collins, Kurt Jackson and Ryan Rivers. Jackson was named Most Outstanding Wrestler for his win over Dunbar state placer Judas McKenzie, fifth in 1A at 220 last year.

Clay High will host an 8-team 1A Duals Tournament on Fri.-Sat. Jan. 13-14 with teams such as Arnold, Key West, Lake Highland Prep, Suwannee, Florida High and Raines visiting for the all Class 1A event.

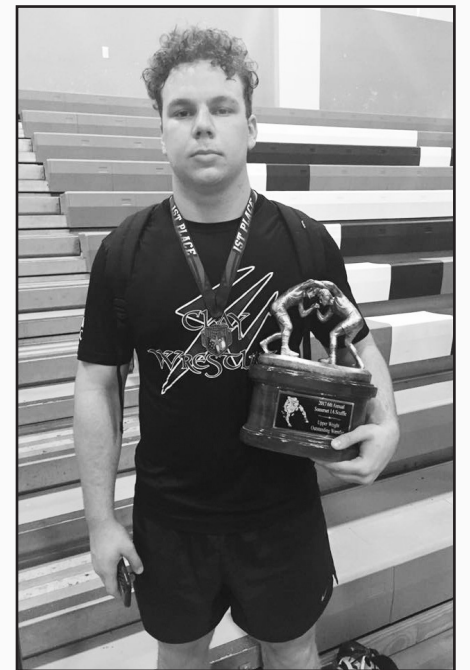
Raiders second at Rob Bierbaum Invite; Lee wins title

JACKSONVILLE — Orange Park High finished second to visiting Battery Creek of South Carolina in team points at the Ron Bierbaum Invitational held Saturday at Episcopal High School in Jacksonville.

Senior Nartorian Lee, at 170 pounds, was the lone individual titleist for the Raiders who medaled 11 wrestlers in total.

Battery Creek won with 261.0 points with Orange Park at 201.5 for second with Mandarin, Nease and Bolles rounding out the top five of eight teams.

In the 106 finals, Orange Park



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY HUNTER HILL
Clay High 220 pound wrestler Kurt Jackson took the Most Outstanding Wrestler at the 1A Scuffle at Somerset Academy.

freshman Cameron Broughton lost a 9-8 decision to Bolles freshman Josh Bono. Ben Elliot lost in the 195 final with teammate Shaun Bizzell losing a 5-4 decision in the 285 final.

At 220, Orange Park's Tyler DeHart pinned twice to the final then lost via pin in the championship match.

At 145, Jacob Campbell lost a 10-6 championship decision.

For thirds, Dean Ganci, at 126, Richard Cuiksa, at 132, and Dashner St. Vilus, at 138, all got bronze medals.

Nathaniel Guthrie took fourth in 160 for Orange Park.

Reid

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Rivera, a 20-2 wrestler from Fort Myers High School.

For the team points, Ridgeview took fourth overall behind Osceola's 189.5 points, Palm Harbor University's 175.5, Jensen Beach's 155.0 and Ridgeview with 110.5. Melbourne, Fort Myers, Merritt Island, Palm Bay, Estero and Forest Hill rounded out the top 10 teams. Osceola was fifth in 3A last year with Palm Harbor 16th also in 3A. At 138, Saeid Ejmali took third with a 4-3 win over 3A-Osceola's Leandro Velazques for key points for Ridgeview. Ejmali was a 2A state qualifier for Orange Park last year.

At 106, Gabriel Guzman finished fourth with a 3-0 loss to Eau Gallie's Riley Benninger in the third place match. Guzman lost 11-0 to Osceola's Josu Calderon (27-7) to move into the consolation rounds.

In other consolation action, at 113, Jonathan Kaylor (4-2) won his first match with a pin before losing in round two. Kaylor strung together three wins by pin before losing in the consolation fifth round.

Team Scores

1. Osceola (Kissimmee) 189.5
2. Palm Harbor University 175.5
3. Jensen Beach 155.0
4. **Ridgeview 110.5**
5. Melbourne 108.0
6. Ft Myers 105.5
7. Merritt Island 102.5
8. Palm Bay 98.0
9. Estero 97.5
10. Forest Hill 95.5

At 126, Tanner Belden, (20-9), won three, lost two, and lost in the quarterfinals to Kyle Nesbit of Estero. Nesbit was fifth in 2A at 126 last year.

At 132, Requan Works went 2-2; at 145, Malach Martin went 2-2; at 152, Reed Propes went 1-2; at 160, Keine Avery went 2-2, losing to Osceola's Ethan DeLong in the quarterfinals; at 170 Max Tiedeman went 2-2; at 182, Craig Zacker, went 4-2 with four straight wins in consolation rounds, and, at 285, Kenneth Tresvant went 0-2.

Soccer Districts upcoming

Blue Devils fall to 4A-Nease

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Clay Blue Devil girls soccer, after a fairly simple 8-0 rout of visiting Keystone Heights High School, faced a formidable opponent with 4A-Nease High (10-3-2) visiting and Clay coach Stephanie Waugh was looking for a complete package as her team turns the final corner of the soccer season and prepares for the playoffs.

“Even our practices, it clicks,” said Waugh. “It’s bringing it onto the field, just bringing their confidence and reminding them why you’re here.”

The outcome was nothing close to what she was looking for as the Blue Devils would go down in defeat to the Nease Panthers 4-1.

“We didn’t have all 15 on their 110% tonight and it makes the difference,” said Waugh after the game. “I don’t count on one girl, I count on all of them. Everybody wasn’t in it and it cost us some goals.”

The Blue Devils seemed to miss a spring in their step as they prepared to play. Once the game began, that all changed. At 27:35 left in the first half, Brooke Green set a perfect leading pass to a wide-open Allyssa Stoffel who found herself one-on-one for a surprising first salvo in what was anticipated to be a fast, furious contest.

At the first water break, both teams were almost even for shots on goal. For the next almost 17 minutes, the Panthers and Devils volleyed the ball back and forth with both teams getting off several missed shots.

It was during this foray when the wind seemed to come out of Clay’s sails. With 3:32 remaining in the first, the Panthers struck twice quickly with a corner kick leading to a header goal and a hard shot that sailed right to left as the momentum shifted with the 2-1 halftime score.

In the second half, Clay’s lackluster drive continued and Nease took no time at all to take full advantage.

With just two minutes off the clock, Nease scored off a tipped ball to go up 3-1.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMIONDA

Clay High senior midfielder Brooke Green battles for ball with Nease High defender in Blue Devils’ 4-1 loss last week. Green scored her 100th and 101st career goals in Clay’s 8-0 win over Keystone Heights on January 3 with teammate Lis Stoffel three goals away from her 100th.

With 10:15 left in the game, Nease delivered the final blow bringing the score to 4-1.

“We are almost at the end of the season. Are you going to work that hard and just let it all go or are you going to move to the next game?” said Waugh.

Waugh had Stoffel at a midfield defender position through most of the season, but put her back in her normal offensive forward role the past few games to shore up some scoring opportunities.

“I did stick with it and I liked it and I felt in the beginning our counter attack and our attack were a little bit stronger,” said Waugh. “I think it worked. I didn’t change it even though we were getting beat. Our touch was way off and our support was way off. We didn’t have too much on our side at all tonight.”

Girls Soccer

as of January 6 (Christmas break Dec. 22-Jan. 5)

District 4-3A

District tournament at Menendez Jan.

16-20

2016: Ponte Vedra (Champions, state runners-

up); Clay (runners-up, beat Stanton, lost to Ponte Vedra in region semifinals)

Menendez (11-2-1, 6-0) Wins over Palatka (8-0), Orange Park (8-0), Matanzas (5-1), Atlantic Coast (4-1), Paxon (8-0), Ridgeview (4-0); Clay (3-1); Interlachen (8-0); St. Augustine (10-0); Ponte Vedra (1-0); Losses to Flagler (7-1), Nease (3-1) Next up: St. Augustine Jan. 6, at St. Joseph Academy Jan. 12

Ponte Vedra (7-3-6, 4-1-1) Wins over Orange Park (9-0), Matanzas (8-2), Episcopal (2-1), Lake Mary (1-0), Ridgeview (8-0), Palatka (8-0); Cardinal Gibbons (2-0); Losses to Creekside (2-0), SJCDs (3-2), Niceville (3-2); St. Johns Country Day School (3-2); Menendez (1-0); Tie with Bolles (1-1), Merritt Island (1-1), Fletcher (1-1), Clay (2-2); Newsome (1-1), Stanton (0-0) Next up: Creekside Jan. 6, at Nease Jan. 11, Bartram Trail Jan. 13

Clay (11-3-1, 4-1-1) Wins over Palatka (9-0), Oakleaf (2-1), Orange Park (9-1), Keystone Heights (10-0), Ridgeview (3-2), Matanzas (4-2), Middleburg (8-0), Baker County (13-0); Ridgeview; Keystone Heights (8-0); Loss to SJCDs (4-1); Tie

with Ponte Vedra (2-2); Menendez (3-1); Nease (4-1)

Next up: Middleburg Jan. 9, Palatka Jan. 10, P.K. Yonge Jan. 13

Matanzas (10-7-1, 3-3-0) Wins over Palatka (8-0), Wolfson (18-0), Orange Park (10-1), Interlachen (8-0) Sandalwood (8-0), Ridgeview (7-4), Deltona (8-0); St. Augustine (8-0); Middleburg (8-0); White (16-0); Losses to Ponte Vedra (8-2), Menendez (5-1), Clay (4-2), Seabreeze (6-4), Nease (3-1), Flagler Palm Coast (9-4); Bartram Trail (8-0); Tie to Flagler Palm Coast (4-4).

Next up: at Deland Jan. 6, Bishop Kenny Jan 9, at Astronaut Jan. 12

Ridgeview (5-8-0, 1-5-0) Wins over Palatka (8-0), Middleburg (9-1), St. Augustine (10-3), Orange Park (5-0); Middleburg (8-0); Losses to Oakleaf (3-1), SJCDs (8-0), Clay (3-2), Ponte Vedra (8-0), Matanzas (7-4), Menendez (4-0), Clay Oakleaf Next up: Fernandina Beach Jan. 10, at Bishop Kenny Jan. 13

Orange Park (2-9-1, 1-4-0) Wins over Palatka (5-3); Crescent City (6-2); Losses to West Nassau (6-2); Ponte Vedra (9-0); Matanzas (10-1); Clay (9-1); Menendez (8-0); Middleburg (3-1); Yulee (4-2); Bartram Trail (8-0); Middleburg (7-1); Tie to Keystone Heights (3-3)

Next up: at Fleming Island Jan. 6, West Nassau Jan. 9, at Oakleaf Jan. 11, at Clay Jan. 18

Palatka (3-8-0, 0-6-0) Wins over Interlachen (3-1), Wolfson (8-0); Losses to Matanzas (8-0), Clay (9-0), Menendez (8-0), Newberry (3-0), Ridgeview (8-0), Orange Park (5-3), Fort White (2-1), Ponte Vedra (8-0)

Next up: Keystone Heights Dec. 12, Yulee Dec. 13

District 4-4A

District tournament at Bartram Trail Jan. 16-20

2016: Creekside (Champions, lost to Niceville region finals), Nease (Runners-up, lost to Fletcher region quarters)

Bartram Trail (11-2-2, 5-0-1) Wins over Mandarin (6-0), Fleming Island (2-0), Oakleaf (7-2), Orange Park (8-0), Middleburg (12-0), Fletcher (5-0), St. Augustine (8-0), Middleburg (12-0); Matanzas (8-0); Nease (5-1); Episcopal (6-2), Paxon (8-0); Losses to Bolles (5-3), SJCDs (4-1); Tie to Creekside (1-1), Flagler (1-1)

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Orange Park

Jacobs, Stackhouse win Resolution 5K

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – On the first wintry day in Florida, Jan. 7, nearly 700 runners showed up for the damp, wet Resolution Run 5K in Orange Park, an annual event staged by the Florida Striders running club.

“I can’t believe 700 people got up this morning, looked out their kitchen window or looked up the weather channel and said, ‘Let’s go run three miles,’” said race director Bill Krause. “We were quite surprised at the registrations we got the week before the race. Maybe people thought the weather would not catch up to us.”

Winning the event with a sub-five minute per mile pace was Jacksonville running veteran Justin Jacobs, 30, who finished in 15:22 to out sprint Brian Shroust, 43, who finished in 15:42. Jacobs recently won the Thanksgiving Day Half Marathon in Jacksonville.

For the women, Julie Stackhouse, 37, of Jacksonville, found herself more than a minute up on Michelle Krueger, 41, of Jacksonville, for the win in 17:15 with Krueger in at 18:52. Orange Park Junior High distance ace Mei Chiang, just 12 years old, took third in 19:39 to finish 30th overall. Ana Chiang, 9, won the women’s 9-10 age group in 23:55.

In the master’s ranks, Fleming Island’s Shelly Allen, 53, won her specialty in 19:59 with Brad Smith, 47, of Ponte Vedra, top mens master in 16:10.

In a very strong showing for up and coming distance runners for area high schools, St. Johns Country Day School seventh grader Matthew Stratton, 12, who competed in the 1A state cross country race this year, won the 11-13 age group in 17:15 with the next six finishers all from



Ana Chiang, left, 9, of Orange Park, and Rebecca Stratton, 9, of Orange Park, go shoulder to shoulder at start of Resolution Run 5K race in Orange Park on Saturday. Chiang won age group. Stratton was fourth.

Fleming Island in times ranging from 18:47 to 23:19.

For the high schoolers, Fleming Island High state cross country runner Andrew Miller bested the 16 minute mark for the first time to win in 15:54 with Orange Park High’s John Bear runnerup at 16:58, Clay High’s Ben Hathaway third at 17:43 and Oakleaf High’s Dylan Nelson fourth at 18:00.

In the women’s 11-13, St. Johns Country Day School’s top cross country runner, Mackenzie Glenn, showed she was back in top form after a rugged state meet season, with a win in 21:09. Glenn topped Grace Adams, 12, of Orange Park, who was second in 22:23.

Other age group winners for the men were Josue Velasquez, 26, of Orange Park, in 25-29, in 18:47; Gary Myers, 44, of Or-

ange Park, in 17:49, in 40-44, and Robert Wood, 50, of Orange Park, in 18:38 in 50-54.

Age group winners for the women included Hayley Sakowski, 9, of Fleming Island, in 27:47 in under-9s; Belissa Del Valle, 29, of Orange Park, in 19:53, in 25-29, and Angela Enyedi, 37, of Fleming Island, in 20:39 in 35-39.

Next up is the Pirate 5K in Palencia on January 7 and the Hellcat 10/30K/50K in Green Cove Springs on January 21. Also the very fast Matanzas 5K is slated for January 21 in St. Augustine.

The Hellcat races will be staged at the Military Museum of North Florida in Green Cove Springs’ historic Lee Field off Highway 16. Races are a fundraiser for the Military Museum of North Florida. The museum is a 501 C-3 Corp.



Sisters Natalia Versage, left, 8 years old, and Sophia, 10, race across finish line in 30:17. Natalia took second in age group.

Lee Field is the home of the U.S. Navy’s F6F Hellcat fighter of WWII fame. The course is a loop course around the perimeter of the old base. Each loop is 6.2 miles. The 10km runners do it once, 30km runners do it 3 times and 50K runners do it 5 times. The course is a combination of pavement and dirt roads. No roots or rocks. Races start at 7 a.m. (50K) and 8 a.m. (30K and 10K).

Last year’s 50K winner was Amie Dworecki in 4:13:44.

Soccer from page 30

Next up: at Ponte Vedra Jan. 13,

Creekside (7-3-6, 3-0-2) Wins over Fletcher (3-0), Ponte Vedra (2-0), St. Augustine (8-0), Nease (3-1); Ponte Vedra (6-1); Losses to SJCDs 4-2, Episcopal (3-2); Tie with Fleming Island (0-0), Merritt Island (1-1), Lake Mary (1-1); Stanton (2-2), Bartram Trail (1-1)

Next up: Bolles (10-5-2) Jan. 12

Nease (11-3-1, 5-2-0) Wins over Fleming Island (1-0), Oakleaf (3-2), Menendez (3-1), Stanton (2-1), St. Augustine (8-0), Matanzas (3-1) Bolles (1-0); St. Augustine (8-0), Atlantic Coast (2-0); Middleburg (8-0), Clay (4-1); Losses to Buchholz (2-0); Creekside (3-1), Bartram Trail (5-1); Tie with Flagler (2-2), Creekside (3-1)

Next up: at Episcopal (11-4) Jan 9, Ponte Vedra (7-3-6) Jan. 11, Paxon (5-7-2) Jan. 12

Fleming Island (10-2-2, 4-2-1) Wins over Middleburg (11-0), Fletcher (5-0), Ocala Forest (6-0), Mandarin (2-0), Oakleaf (4-1) Stanton (2-1), St. Augustine (8-0); Oakleaf, (4-1), P.K. Yonge; Duval

Charter (8-0); Orange Park; Losses to Nease (1-0), Bartram Trail (2-0); Tie with Creekside (0-0), Bolles (1-1)

Next up: Episcopal (11-4-0) Jan. 11.

Oakleaf (3-4-0, 1-2-0) Wins over Ridgeview (3-1), St. Augustine (8-0), Middleburg (8-0); Bishop Snyder (5-2); Losses to Clay (2-1), Nease (3-2), Buchholz (3-2), Bartram Trail (7-2), Creekside, Fleming Island Bartram Trail (7-2), Creekside (2-0), Fleming Island (4-1)

Next up: Orange Park (2-9-1) Jan. 11

Stats: Michelle Kanaskie (14 goals), Nicolette Conte (7 goals) Alyssa Farmer (7 goals); Assists-Conte (14)

Middleburg (5-10-0, 1-5-0) Wins over Sandalwood (3-2), St. Augustine (3-2), Orange Park (3-1); Wolfson (8-0); Orange Park (7-1); Losses to Fleming Island (11-0), Snyder (9-1), Oakleaf (8-0); Bartram Trail (12-0); Nease (8-0); Matanzas (8-0); Next up: at Clay Jan. 9, at Keystone Heights Jan. 13

St. Augustine (0-12-0, 0-5-0) Losses to Middleburg (3-2), Oakleaf (8-0), Nease (0-8), Ridgeview (10-3), Creekside (8-0), Bartram Trail (8-0); Matanzas (8-0); Sandalwood (2-0); Menendez

(10-0); Menendez (8-0)

Next up: at Flagler Palm Coast Jan. 12

District 5-2A

District tournament at Fort White Jan. 17-20

2016: Santa Fe (champions, lost in region finals to Bishop Moore), P.K. Yonge (runners-up, lost to Santa Fe in region semifinals)

Keystone Heights (10-5-3, 7-2-1) Wins over St. Francis (5-0), Fort White (3-1), Crescent City (8-1), Newberry (3-0), Williston (5-1), Crescent City (3-1), Baker County (6-1), Interlachen (5-0), Fort White (2-0); Palatka (3-2); Losses to Clay (9-0), P.K. Yonge (6-3), West Nassau (3-0), Santa Fe (5-0); Tie with Orange Park (3-3); Clay (8-0); Ties to Gainesville (2-2); Newberry (1-1)

Next up: at Williston Jan. 6, Interlachen Jan. 12, Middleburg Jan. 13

Santa Fe (13-3-1, 8-0-0)
Newberry (10-3-1, 9-2-1)
Keystone Heights (10-5-3, 7-2-1)
P.K. Yonge (8-6-0, 6-4-0)
Fort White (5-8-4, 4-5-2)
Interlachen (23-14-1, 3-8-1)
Crescent City (11-12-2, 0-10-2)

Williston (2-9-2, 2-8-1)

Bradford (0-0-0)

District 2-1A

District tournament at Christ’s Church Academy Jan. 17-20

2016: SJCDs (Champions, state champs) St. Joseph (runnerup, lost to SJCDs in region semifinal)

St. Johns Country Day School (15-0-0, 5-0-0, Ranked #1 in Florida (Topdrawersoccer.com) Wins over Ridgeview (8-0), Maclay (3-0), Episcopal (7-0), Hamilton County (8-0), St. Francis (8-0), Creekside (4-2), Bartram Trail (4-1), Christs Church (8-0), University Christian (8-0), Clay (4-1), St. Joseph (2-0), Ponte Vedra (3-2); Santa Fe (8-0); Mandarin (5-0); Bolles (2-0)

Next up: Oak Hall Jan. 6, Gainesville Jan. 10, P.K. Yonge Jan. 12
St. Johns Country Day School (15-0-0, 5-0-0)
St. Joseph Academy (3-2-0, 2-1-0)
Christs Church (4-4-1, 3-2-0)
Oak Hall (9-2-1, 3-2-1)
Hamilton County (5-6-2, 0-3-1)
St. Francis Catholic (5-5-2, 1-3-0)
University Christian (0-5-0, 0-3-0)

College basketball: FSCJ vs. College of Central Florida

Mack, Bruce highlight Patriots visit to Jax

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

JACKSONVILLE — Orange Park High School basketball fans remember basketball forward Shakarri Mack as a hard-driving, ball diving defender with a knack for tough rebounds while Clay High School hoopsters were weekly entertained by the outstretched arms of 6-foot-9 center Phil Bruce.

The duo was back in action on Saturday as part of a Florida State College Jacksonville vs. College of Central Florida basketball double header at the FSCJ campus in Jacksonville.

Mack, who was joined during recruitment with teammate Gianni Ruemmeley, a Clay Today Player of Year selection during her senior year also as a Raider, got plenty of playing time in Saturday's 64-55 loss to the Blue Wave, but Ruemmeley was on the bench with a knee brace on after tearing her knee up during a practice a month or so ago.

"I remember going to watch them play in high school and knowing I wanted to try and get both of them," said College of Central Florida coach Tommy Jones, now at 5-10. "They played hard and were smart



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO
Former Clay High center Phil Bruce slam dunks for FSCJ Blue Wave.

kids. They both were starting at one point." Jones liked the hustle of both girls and admitted to trying to get Mack to play out front more as a guard during the start of the season. Ruemmeley immediately impacted the team with nearly 10 points per game, five rebounds and two assists until her season-ending injury.

"We were just finishing up a drill on boxing out when the knee snapped," said Ruemmeley. "I wanted to finish up strong with the team, but it will have to wait until next year."

Jones regretted that Ruemmeley's injury came late in the season as a redshirt status could not be asserted.

"She won't be able to recapture her season of eligibility with the injury which



Orange Park High's district champion trio; left to right, Shakarri Mack, Maxine Knox and Gianni Ruemmeley were on hand to watch Mack, Ruemmeley and their College of Central Florida Patriots take on the FSCJ Blue Wave in Jacksonville. Ruemmeley is mending from a knee injury.



Oakleaf Junior High and high school standout Nick Strawter got plenty of minutes in Blue Wave match against CCF.

is a shame, but we'll work on getting her strong again for next year," said Jones. "I'm hurting now without her."

As for Mack out front, Jones liked Mack's energy, but felt she was more comfortable under the backboard.

"She's been under the boards most of her basketball life, so it was a hard transition," said Jones, who noted a 12-point, 14 rebound outing last week for Mack. "I got her back underneath and we use her bringing the ball up on offense every now and then. She's tough underneath."

Also in the gym, but as a fan, was the third senior member of that district title basketball squad at Orange Park as Maxine Knox was visiting from college in Chicago.

Ruemmeley talked about the time management of the college game as the biggest impact of playing at the next level.

"The hardest part was all the extra time you have to put on your schedule," said Ruemmeley. "I learned to build a schedule. Mom's not here to wake us up and make breakfast and all that."

In the mens game, Florida State Col-

lege mans three area athletes with Clay's Bruce, Oakleaf High's Christian Larson and Oakleaf Junior High and Oakleaf High School ace Nick Strawter, who later transferred to the Bolles School and won a state title, all on the Blue Wave roster.

Bruce, a starting center in 10 of 12 games this year, is in his second year at FSC-J and is averaging three points per game, but primarily a lane presence on defense and rebounder for coach Neil Orr. Bruce, with a high point game of 10 points and five rebounds in a win over Polk State. Bruce was looking forward to a possible graduation and transfer to play at a four year school after the season.

"It's all part of the plan," said Bruce, who had a monster dunk followed by a wicked blocked shot against Central Florida in first half action.

For Strawter, who returned to the lineup after a hairline fracture in his shinbone sidelined him, was used primarily as a passing guard across the middle of the court as FSC-J utilized a strong sideline to sideline offensive attack.


"First game back after the injury so I'm anxious to see what can happen," said Strawter, who was coached at Oakleaf Junior High by John Conley, now at Orange Park High School.

For Larson, the youngest and newest of the trio, the precision of the college game has been his main learning point.

"I knew I came in with some of my own skills, but the preciseness at this level was something that I have had to learn about," said Larson. "Speed wise and shooting wise, guys come in able to do that from anywhere, but to be able to pass and dribble and see things quickly and react is the bigger skill."


Ironically, Central Florida will host Daytona State College (9-7) on January 11 where Oakleaf High graduate Destiny Arvinger, a freshman starting guard, is averaging 12.5 points per game with four assists and four rebounds. Arvinger has two 21-point games for the season.

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Knights pushing for late district run

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

MIDDLEBURG – Coming into the Jan. 6 matchup between the Middleburg High Broncos and the visiting Oakleaf High Knights, Middleburg had to do one thing: continue to build on what they accomplished so far this year.

For Oakleaf, with a tournament title in hand from a St. Augustine Christmas event, the game would be a springboard into a final push to get to the top of district 4-8A.

District 4-8A

Creekside (13-2, 4-0)

Buchholz (6-7, 2-2)

Fleming Island (11-9, 2-3)

Oakleaf (9-6, 1-2)

Bartram Trail (9-5, 1-3)

Key district games: Tues., Jan. 10 Oakleaf at Bartram Trail, Buchholz at Creekside, Oakleaf at Fleming Island Jan. 13, Oakleaf at Buchholz Jan. 17, Bartram Trail at Oakleaf Jan. 24, Creekside at Oakleaf Jan. 27

In this last month of the season, Oakleaf has nine games remaining with five of those in district play. Right now, because they only won one of the three district games played so far, Oakleaf is at the bottom of the standings, looking up. Early season losses to Creekside and Buchholz could prove disastrous come district time, but the Knights control their own destiny with five district games still on the docket.

Fleming Island, with a Friday loss to Creekside, is still in the hunt as well with their own district slate filled to the brim with consecutive games against Buchholz,



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Creekside High guard J'Michael Plummer has been thorn in side of both Fleming Island and Oakleaf high basketball success with key district 4-8A wins over both area schools.

Oakleaf and Bartram Trail Jan. 12, 13 and 17.

With only one win, Middleburg knew they were close to getting to the next level as they had multiple games where those losses were within five points or less. Oakleaf with its stacked bench was no match though as the Broncos went down in defeat 70-42.

"We've won seven of our last eight games and we've really played well as a group, we won the St. Augustine Tournament, and we want to carry that into the second half of the season," said Oakleaf High coach Jason Price. "We've won seven of our last eight games and we've really played well as a group, we won the St. Augustine Tournament, and we want to carry that into the second half of the season."

It didn't start out all Oakleaf as both teams ran the court and could not sink a basket for the first minute and 45 seconds. Middleburg broke the ice with a layup and that would be the last time the Broncos could say they had the lead.

At the end of the first, Oakleaf built an 18-9 lead.

In the second quarter, with about five minutes left on the clock, the Knights put up a barrage of baskets that were the result of Middleburg missed shot rebounds. Oakleaf outscored Middleburg 21-11 in the quarter and headed to the locker room with a 39-20 lead. By the half, every Oakleaf player on the roster, except one, scored points. Coming out of the break, the third quarter was more of the same with Oakleaf again outscoring the Broncos by 200%, 17-8.

In the final quarter, Middleburg began to move the ball and better positioned players under the basket to pick up rebounds from missed shots. Even with the improvement and Oakleaf sitting their starters, the Broncos were still outscored 16-12.

Middleburg has 12 games remaining of which four are conference. If they can fix their rebound issues, they could still find their way into the playoffs. As Bronco Head Coach Travis Tipton said, "They just have to be more of a family."



Clay High guard Colin Wilson goes up for last second layup despite foul from Orange Park's Blake Partin. Wilson landed one of two free throws in final seconds of non-district contest won 38-37 by Blue Devils.

District girls weightlifting schedules

State championships set for Feb. 3-4

District 5-2A

Bartram Trail

Creekside

Fleming Island

Middleburg

Nease

Oakleaf

St. Augustine

At St. Augustine High School, January 10 (4:30 p.m.)

2016 returning district champions: Emma Weiskopf MHS (119, No lift at state meet), Neva Clinkscale MHS (154, 10th in 2A), Korpo Sumo OHS (199)

Region meet: January 19 at Flagler Palm Coast

District 5-1A

Baker County

Baldwin

Bishop Snyder

Clay

Ed White



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High weightlifter Korpo Sumo is a top contender to medal at the upcoming FHSAA weightlifting championships. Area wrestlers will be at districts Jan. 10-11.

Orange Park Ridgeview

Westside

At Baker County High School, January 11 (3:30 p.m.)

2016 returning district champions: Ashleigh Dean CHS (129, 3rd in 1A), Carlisle Kristen CHS (139, 6th in 1A), Erykah Murray CHS (169, 11th in 1A)

Region championships at Clay January 21

District 7-1A

Bronson

Eastside

Hawthorne

Interlachen

Keystone Heights

North Marion

Oak Hall

At North Marion High School, January 11 (4:30 p.m.)

Region championships at Menendez January 18

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SUNDAY, JAN 22, 8 PM

Mercy Street — Season 2

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f t i



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Still unbeaten

Fleming Island forward Marcus Murphy scored twice with teammate Reid Davis hitting for three goals as the Golden Eagles stayed unbeaten with a 5-2 win over Bolles on Mon., Jan. 9. Fleming Island, 15-0-2, travels to 3A-Ponte Vedra (12-1-3, defending 3A champions) on Wed., Jan. 11, then hosts Tallahassee Leon (13-3-3) on January 13 before ending the regular season with Fletcher on January 19. Fleming Island High School will host the district 4-4A championship tournament.

Spartans

from page 27

the modus operandi of Spartan soccer.

Start to finish; St. Johns is sitting on a 16-0-0 season record thus far with a recent 8-0 halftime win over district foe Oak Hall.

Pushing through districts and regions: St. Johns was unscored upon throughout the regions with shutouts over Rocky Bayou (8-0), St. Joseph's (2-0) and First Academy (4-0) last year.

Peaking perfectly in the state rounds; St. Johns smashed Lakeland Christian in the state semifinals (6-0) before dispatching of Community of Naples in the state title game (5-0).

Not a bad season. In 2015, St. Johns, in a reversal of sorts, allowed one goal in the same state run with Community of Naples losing 2-1 to the Spartans in the state semifinal. St. Johns wound up beating Lakeland Christian 4-0 in that state final.

Pickett likens the transition of new young players with the maturity of the skilled veterans as the key to the Spartans' success.

"I've always said even when these three were young, it's not our big time players that win championships, it's the role players," said Pickett. "If you can get all 11 players on the field playing at a high level believing in themselves and you get good players like these three, they make everyone around them play better. They did it when we had Carson (Pickett), Megan (Rogers) and Ellen (Crist) were here and now it's their time."

For Crews, the drive is to always be better, if that is possible.

"The legacy part of what coach said is important to us," said Crews, who is slated to attend Texas Christian University in a year. "We have a sense around us as to where the other two or three are and that's a fun part of the game."

The trio joked about a comparison to the NFL's New England Patriots Super

Bowl success (Four titles) with Detlefsen getting the "Rob Gronowski" moniker with her quiet, blue-collar approach of creating opportunity from outside the goalie box, Crews getting the "Tom Brady" moniker with her quarterbacking of the attack from the middle of the field, and Newton getting the "Julian Edelman" moniker as the high-flying favorite wide receiver for Brady.

"We play a lot together with club ball and here at St. Johns and it's very easy to know where the other is going to be," said Detlefsen, slated to attend Troy University in Alabama.

Pickett broached the subject of numerous Spartan teammates on one specific college team; only has happened once in his career, with the three junior players all slated for colleges abroad.

"I think it doesn't work because when you get to becoming a very good player, now they are ready to go to the next level," said Pickett, whose daughter Carson Pickett, completed a fantastic career at Florida State University and is presently playing pro soccer in Seattle, a first for St. Johns soccer. "Now, they want to go to the next level and make their own name. It's time to close the high school, club chapters in life. They can all go to college and make their own name and have great careers."

And, as far as the "secret sauce of success" as a Spartan soccer team, Pickett noted the simplicity of it all.

"Kids in this program understand what it is when they get here," said Pickett. "We have a lot of fun, but we also do a lot of hard work. We are very serious when we hit the field. They know when we can laugh and have fun, but also when to work hard."

For the upcoming playoff run, Pickett, who scouted some Orlando area region teams the day before the Oak Hall game, promises plenty of speed.

"Movement off the ball at a fast pace is our secret if you want to call it that," said Pickett. "It's one thing to be fast and athletic on the field and run around and be physical, but it's another thing to play fast."



Ridgeview High graduate Jaylin Gilbert has honed his three-point skills to boost the Benedict College attack.

Gilbert torching 3-point nets for Benedict

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Ridgeview High graduate Jaylin Gilbert is second on the Benedict College mens basketball team with his three point shooting prowess, according to Benedict College sports information.

Gilbert, who transferred to Benedict after a stint at Miami-Dade College, has hit 24 of 63 three point attempts to earn second on the team to teammate Quayshun Hawkins who has 26 of 64 three pointers.

Gilbert has been in 12 games with three starts and is averaging 8.2 points per game. He has five assists and 18 rebounds for the Tigers who are now 7-6 overall, 4-1 in the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. The Tigers sit in second place behind Claflin College at 9-4, also 4-1, with Fort Valley State at 6-7, 4-1.

Gilbert has game scoring totals of 18 against Livingston and two games of 16 points apiece against Saint Leo and Shaw.

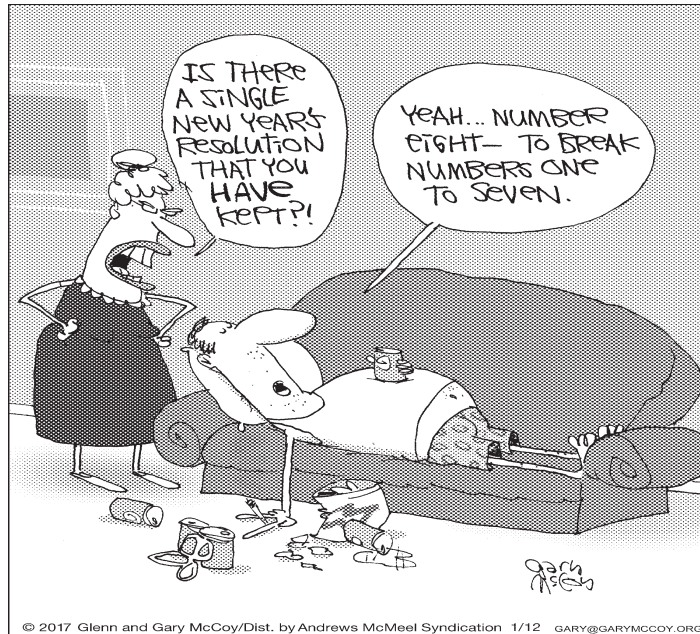
In an archived story of the Tigers 82-73 win over Livingston on December 29, Gilbert was mentioned as second in scoring to Hawkins' 29 points with Benedict coming back from 16 points twice for the win.

At Miami Dade, Gilbert averaged near eight points per game with three rebounds in 28 games played.

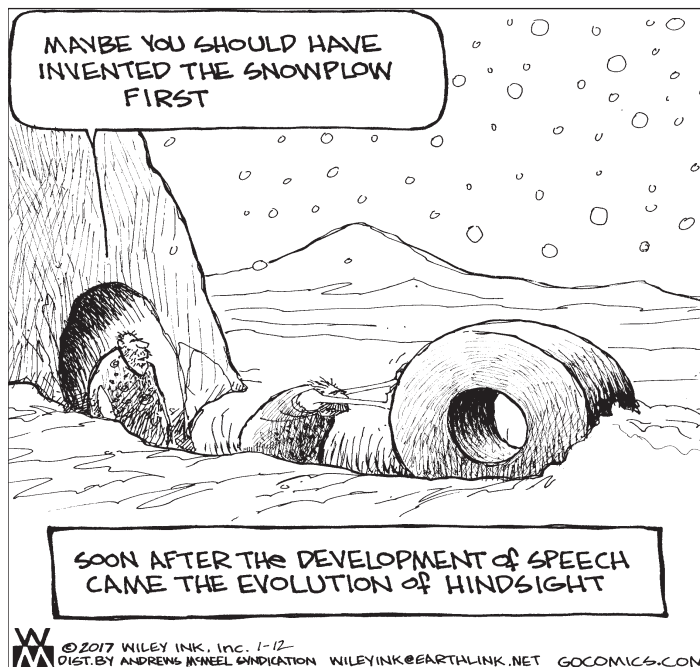
In 2013, Gilbert was a silky-smooth long-range bomber for Ridgeview High coach Rob Feltner, now the Middleburg High School principal, that won a district 3-6A title, two region playoff games; over Columbia and Wolfson, before losing in the region final to eventual 6A runnerup Pensacola Pine Forest 65-63.

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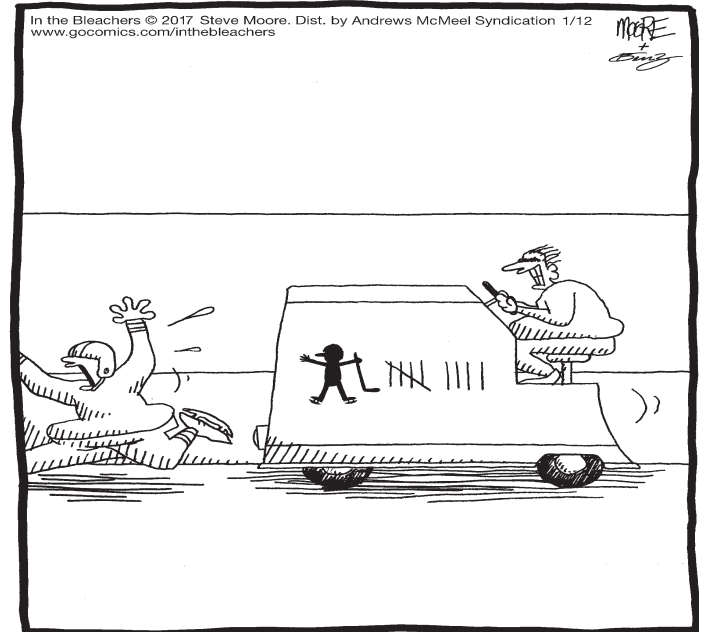
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Fleming Island



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Family Physician

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