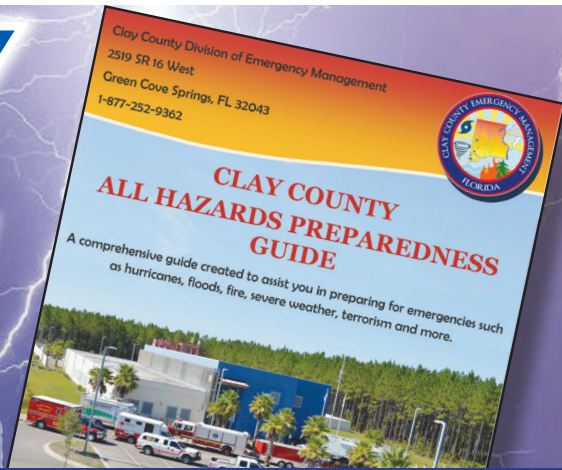


CLAY TODAY



Clay County All Hazards Preparedness Guide

– INSERT

THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2017

WWW.CLAYTODAYONLINE.COM

VOLUME 51, NO. 22 75¢

Roadway leaves residents in traffic snarl

By Kile Brewer
Staff Writer

LAKE ASBURY – A stretch of Henley Road near the Black Creek bridge has been closed to southbound traffic since early April. The road sees a lot of traffic, which led to a widening project about five years ago. Once the project was completed and some time passed, county officials started

noticing a problem.

“We’ve been monitoring the road for a little over a year,” said Dale Smith, the county’s public works director. “There have been some issues.”

The issues Smith mentions are things that caused immediate road closure until further notice, forcing all traffic onto the northbound side of the road, and creating

an obstacle course of barricades and cones that redirect motorists to the detour.

Even during low traffic hours, the detour has created problems for those living on the streets perpendicular to the lane closure. The temporary blockades make turning onto the road a chore, especially near the bottom of the hill south of the Black Creek bridge. One resident who

was waiting to turn left mid-morning onto northbound Henley Road said it’s nearly impossible to get across the detour and onto the highway during rush hour when traffic is backed up.

However, the delays might be necessary in the interest of safety. The road’s surface near a retaining wall has started

SEE ROAD, 17

Honoring the lost who served

By Eric Cravey
Managing Editor

CAMP BLANDING – At its peak, Camp Blanding was so large it ranked as the fourth largest city in Florida as it would train almost 1 million soldiers to do battle in World War II. On Monday, about 150 people gathered at the camp for Memorial Day to remember those who died while serving in the country’s armed forces.

“Americans must never forget the sacrifices of our fellow countrymen in defending our country and protecting our freedom. Let us never forget that freedom is not free and that we should all be grateful for the men and women throughout history who have given their lives to keep us free,” said State Rep. Bobby

SEE MEMORIAL, 9



From left, retired Maj. Gen. Ronald O. Harrison, former Adjutant General of Florida, State Rep. Bobby Payne (R-19) of Palatka and Camp Blanding Post Commander Col. Matt Johnson lay a wreath in honor of those who died while serving in the U.S. military during the May 29 Memorial Day service on base. See page 6 & 7 for more photos.

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Wolfson Children's Bass Tournament

Fleming Island physician among winners

PALATKA – A Fleming Island physician was among the winners at the 28th annual Wolfson Children's Bass Tournament.

Robert Tyson, a pediatric emergency medicine physician in the Wolfson Children's Emergency Center, and a resident of Fleming Island, won first place in the VIP and Friends tournament with his fishing partner Harry Tyson of St. Augustine. The duo had a combined weight of 22.72 pounds. Brandon Williams and Deryl Williams of Lake City came in second with 21.02 pounds, and Dennis Redd and Robby Ratliff of Lake City was third with 20.37 combined pounds.

More than 1,200 fishermen in 630 boats competed for cash prizes in the tournament held May 18-20 at Palatka City Docks.

First place honors went to Adam Newburn of San Mateo, Florida, and John Mobley of St. Johns, Florida. They posted a five-fish aggregate weight of 25.33 pounds for the top cash prize of \$10,000. The team finished more than a pound ahead of the nearest competition, Ryan Crowley of Jacksonville and Chris Church of Sherwood, Arkansas, whose combined weight of 23.97



Harry Tyson of St. Augustine, right, and Robert Tyson of Fleming Island won first place in the VIP and Friends division of the 28th Annual Wolfson Children's Hospital Bass Tournament.

pounds, won second place. John Kremer and Travis Kremer, both of Sanford, Florida, finished a close third at 23.57 pounds.

In the Big Bass competition, second place tournament winners Ryan Crowley

and Chris Church, caught an 11.33-pound bass and took home first prize and \$5,000. Stephen Bishop of Deland, Florida, and Dell Massie from Belle Isle, Florida, finished second in the Big Bass competition

at 9.26 pounds, and Daniel Gaskins and Josh Gaskins, both from Lake City, won third place with 8.37 pounds.

Competition was tight in the Lads and Lasses tournament, but first place went to Jeremy and Sarah Tate from Summerfield, Florida, whose aggregate weight was 25.33. Second place went to David and Barbara Burch from Jacksonville Beach with a weight of 22.16, and Brent Meyers and Sarah Cooley from Palatka claimed third place with 22.04 pounds.

The winner in the drawing for the 21-foot, fully rigged 2017 Bullet 21XRD with Boatmate trailer and Mercury 225 Pro XS motor was Joshua Wisham of Palatka.

The Wolfson Children's Hospital Bass Tournament – second largest bass tournament in the nation – continues to grow each year. In 2016, 688 registered boats and 1,376 fishermen participated. To date, the tournament has raised more than \$4 million to help provide for the educational needs of patients and staff, and to purchase life-saving technology for the infants, children and young adults in our care.

Storms leave families without power

ORANGE PARK – Tuesday's storms caused downed trees and power outages in Orange Park and Clay County.

Almost 6,000 customers of Clay Electric Cooperative were out of power various times on May 30 in the wake of the storm, mainly due to downed power lines. Meanwhile, about 990 JEA customers in the Town of Orange Park lost power.

"Most of the outages were caused by high winds from severe thunderstorms that snapped tree limbs and pushed over trees onto our lines. We had crews working to restore power throughout the night. Only a few scattered outages remain in our 14-county service area this morning. We appreciate the patience of our members when outages occur due to severe weather events," said Wayne Mattox, manager of communications for Clay Electric Cooperative.

Clay County Emergency Management reports that about 40 or more homes

were damaged by trees during the storm.

"Residents are urged to use caution through the night and in the morning due to downed trees, and power lines," said John Ward, emergency management director in a prepared statement. "The damage was related to straight line

At the same time, authorities are also watching a new wildfire near the Clay-Putnam County line.

The Florida Highway Patrol is monitoring a 600-acre wildfire in the area of U.S. Highway 17 and Warner Road at the county line, which may affect roadways in both counties.

Motorists are encouraged to use caution when traveling in this area. Visibility may deteriorate quickly due to smoke and fog-like conditions, especially during the night and early morning hours. Motorists are reminded to reduce their speed as necessary and utilize their low beam headlights in order to adapt to changing weather conditions.

'Most of the outages were caused by high winds from severe thunderstorms that snapped tree limbs and pushed over trees onto our lines.'

Hazard preparedness guide inside today's paper

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – With the memory of Hurricane Matthew and Tropical Storm Hermine still fresh on the mind of the residents of Northeast Florida

as we enter a new hurricane season, Clay County Emergency Management is making available copies of the county's newly revised All-Hazard Preparedness Brochure within this issue of the Clay Today.

This new brochure illustrates the county's new evacuation zones which were refined after the county's response to Hurricane Matthew.

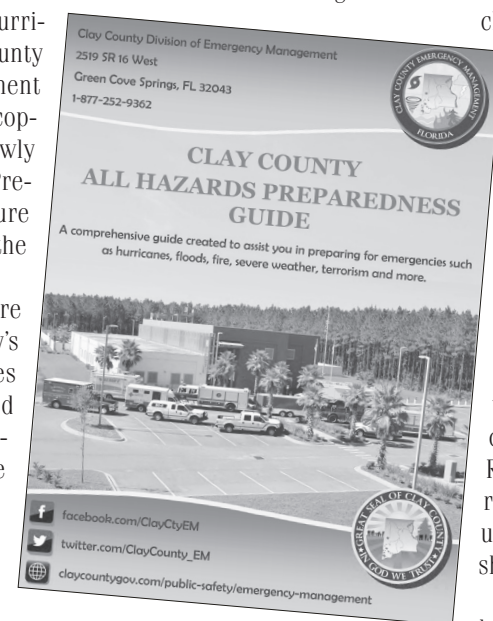
The brochure also contains information concerning a wide range of preparedness topics, from information about how to prepare for hurricanes, floods, wildfires and tornadoes, to how to deal with extreme

temperatures, influenza and active assailants. In addition to the new brochure, Clay County Emergency Management is unveiling a new website which serves as a

clearinghouse for all disaster related information.

On the website alert.clay-countygov.com, Clay County residents can register to receive emergency alerts, find out their evacuation zone, register on the county's Special Medical Needs Registry as well as register their pets to utilize a pet-friendly shelter.

Remember that developing a family disaster plan and stocking a disaster kit are the two best ways to prepare yourself and your family from the adverse



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Tiffany Outman

12 new principals for Clay Schools

Eight positions shuffle, four hired from outside candidates

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Clay County District Schools appointed 12 principals to fill positions for the upcoming school year.

Five assistant principals within the county were promoted to leadership positions, three existing principals will transfer to different schools, and four outside candidates were hired.

These changes will be effective at the start of the school district's fiscal year on July 1, pending board approval.

After board approval, the superintendent and cabinet staff members will meet with each school's staff to introduce the new principal.

The district will also host community meetings for parents, guardians and students to become acquainted with the new principal and their vision for improving student achievement.

"As an educational leader, one of the most important factors to improve student achievement is hiring the most effective principals to lead our schools. These individuals were handpicked and demonstrate the ability and skillset to improve teaching and learning, build a positive climate and culture, and help lead Clay County to become one of the top tier school districts in Florida. I am excited about the future of Clay County and I look forward to working with the newly appointed school leaders and their staff," said Superintendent Addison Davis.

Currently principal Keystone Heights Jr.-Sr. High, Angela Ward becomes the new principal at Argyle Elementary replacing Theresa Roman. Ward will be replaced by Aaron McWilliams, who was an outside candidate.

Currently principal at Lake Asbury Elementary, Sarah Lawson becomes the new principal at Charles E. Bennett Elementary replacing Shelley Lester.

Lawson will be replaced by Tiffany Outman, who is currently principal at S. Bryan Jennings Elementary School.

At S.B. Jennings, Outman will be replaced by Elise Love, who will move into the new role from her current assistant principal position at Clay Hill Elementary.

Thunderbolt Elementary gets a new principal from outside the Clay County School District with the hiring of Lacey Healy who replaces DeeDee Phillips.

Lakeside Junior High gets another outside candidate with the hiring of Mallory McConnell who replaces David

McDonald. Currently assistant principal at Green Cove Springs Junior High, Kristin Rousseau becomes principal at Oakleaf Junior High replacing Anthony Williams.

Currently assistant principal at Fleming Island High, Roger Dailey becomes the new principal at Middleburg High replacing Rob Feltner.

Replacements have not yet been named for the assistant principals who received promotions within the district.

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Post-Session reflection on tourism marketing

By Gil Langley
FloridaPolitics.com

Gov. Rick Scott recently announced record-breaking tourism numbers in the Sunshine State. It may be the last time for a while. Ignoring extensive research, case studies and pleas from travel industry constituents across the state, the Florida Legislature slashed funding for VISIT Florida by a crippling 67 percent – recklessly jeopardizing the tourism industry's leading role as a generator of jobs and government revenues.



Gil Langley

A \$25 million budget to market Florida, one of the world's top travel destinations, is not conducive to success on any front – job creation, revenue increases or lower taxes for Florida residents. By cutting off funds for advertising, marketing, and promotion, Florida will essentially surrender the gains made over the past several years while global competitors steal market share.

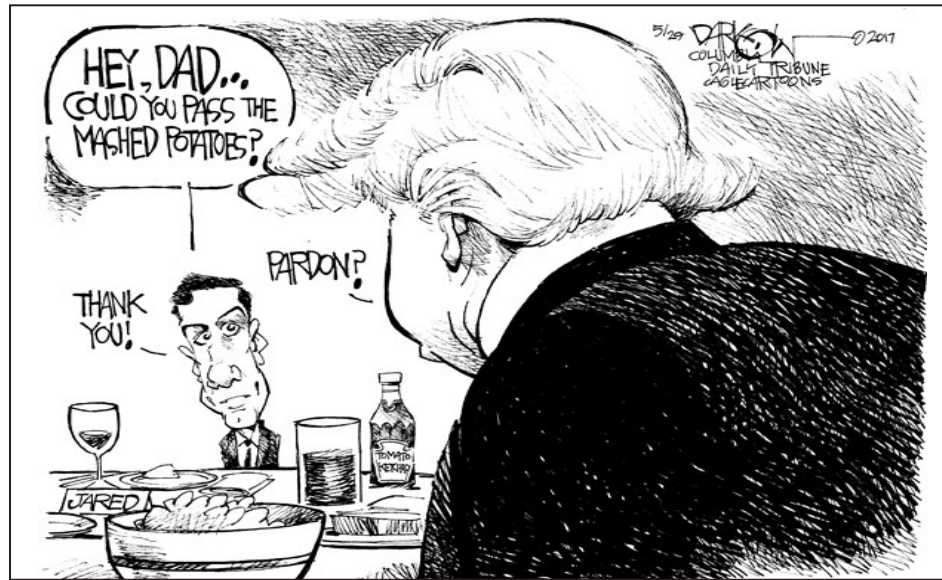
Contrary to assertions made by some elected officials, vacation destinations do not sell themselves. Every great product needs to make potential customers aware of the benefits their product offers – and why it is a better choice than the alternative. That is why California spends more than \$100 million every year to market their state, even with well-known major attractions such as Disneyland, Hollywood, the Golden Gate Bridge and great beaches.

Tourism is an incredibly competitive industry. Not only are we competing against 49 other states (some with eight-figure marketing budgets), we are battling destinations across the globe to get the attention of potential visitors. Mexico, the Bahamas and Cuba are thrilled Florida's travel marketing budget has been reduced, allowing them to gain market share while VISIT Florida goes silent in the marketplace.

These cuts were approved despite warnings from experts in government and the private sector. Detailed case studies about states like Colorado and Washington (who cut tourism marketing, only to lose jobs, revenues and market share) provided a cautionary tale ignored. Prestigious organizations such as Florida TaxWatch conducted economic studies demonstrating VISIT Florida's return on investment, proving investing in tourism is good public policy.

Our elected officials have demonstrated they know the importance of consistent messaging. Legislators raised \$73 million for election campaigns in 2016 – even though 57 seats were uncontested. They spent money to keep the voters informed of the job they do, and explained why they should continue to serve. Reminding vacationers of why Florida is a great choice for

SEE TOURISM, 5



From the editor

Show me the results

By Eric Cravey
Managing Editor

How many times have you looked outside and it's raining only minutes after you heard there was a 20 percent chance of showers that day?

Or how about the days when it reaches 90 degrees, the sky is clear blue and the sun is piercing through your windshield but the forecast has called for an 80 percent chance of rain? I mean, with an 80 percent forecast, one gets hopeful about the possibility of rain.

Weather forecasters helped create the old joke that "It's the only profession where you can be wrong every day and get to keep your job."

Perhaps there is one more occupation to add to that list – lobbyist.

When the Clay County School Board voted 3-2 on May 19, 2016 to continue paying Southern Strategy Group LLC \$5,000 a month, that was the lobbying firm's second trip to the Clay County public trough. On top of the monthly fee, the district's agreement with the Southern Strategy Group allowed the firm to bill the school district for "costs directly attributable to the performance of this work will be billed in addition to the monthly retainer."

Board members Ashley Gilhousen and Betsy Condon justified their votes last year by pointing to the success the firm had brought the Clay County School District that year. Condon, Gilhousen and former superintendent Charlie Van Zant Jr. credited Southern Strategy Group with securing \$1 million in capital outlay funds that were to be used on upgrades at Middleburg High and other academies in the county.

Fast forward to the reality that was the 2017 Legislative Session and there is zero proof that any lobbyist in the state of Florida has done anything to advance public education.

In reality, this year's state education budget, if not vetoed by the governor, actu-

ally means a decrease in funding per pupil for Clay County. Where were the lobbyists when those debates were taking place? After all, we were under the impression they were there in Tallahassee fighting for us, in the trenches even.

What exactly were they lobbying for? Were they taking suggestions from teachers? Were they lobbying for smaller class sizes or less mandatory testing? Were they having one on one meetings with powerful legislators asking for more general funding for education instead of funding for specific programs designed to make us look good?

Perhaps the lobbyists were out waving pom poms for charter schools this year, since a record \$200 million was placed in the state budget for charter schools despite there still not being any true objective data to prove that charter schools perform better than public schools.

Here's a quick look at Clay County's proposed budget numbers: The base student allocation for Clay County Schools would be reduced from \$4,160.71 to \$4,133.64 per student in a county that already has one of the lowest BSAs in the state, if the budget that was passed remains intact. Not to mention, the county is bracing for growth which always places additional burdens on classrooms.

As Superintendent Addison Davis put it, this budget "will negatively influence our overall budget and foster consequences that could potentially impact the quality of education that is provided to our students."

Meanwhile, in 2017, board members Condon and Gilhousen are once again carrying the torch for the lobbyist. At the May 23 agenda workshop, Gilhousen asked if the lobbying firm can attend the May 31 budget meeting so they can make an hour-long presentation about the good work they do.

I know that when a go to a store and buy a product, chances are rather high that, if that product fails me or is simply bad, I have recourse. I can ask for my money back or exchange the product for one that works.

Perhaps it's simply time for the Clay County School District to ask Southern Strategy Group for a refund. However, that might be like praying for an accurate weather forecast.



Eric Cravey



Word of the Week is a new feature that aims to help readers boost their vocabulary in a meaningful way that has practical application. Each week, our editorial staff presents a word, its definition and its use in a sentence.

Extemporize: A verb meaning "to speak spontaneously."

Laurie is so smart that she is able to extemporize on virtually any subject.

This Week in History

5 years ago, 2012

- High winds and heavy rain from Tropical Storm Beryl forced the cancellation of the 25th Annual Concert on the Green.
- The Clay County Sheriff's Office charged husband and wife Carrol Lee Fenton and Lydia Miranda Fenton, both of Orange Park, with aggravated child abuse after an investigation found they had caused permanent disfigurement, bruising and lacerations on their son, who was under age 10.
- Oakleaf Junior High track coach and physical education teacher Mike Ford announced that he would be leaving the school as his family would be moving to Georgia.

10 years ago, 2007

- After eight months of participating in Clay County School Board meetings via internet and telephone while on National Guard deployment in Kuwait, District 3 board member Charlie Van Zant Jr. was replaced by his father Charles Van Zant Sr. by gubernatorial appointment.
- Sheriff Rick Beseler predicted as many as 125 layoffs and a loss of \$8 million in revenue if state lawmakers moved ahead with proposed tax cuts in the 2007 Legislature.
- Residents on Fleming Island's Raggedy Point Road complained to local officials

SEE HISTORY, 5

Corrections

In the May 25 story headlined "Health Improvement Plan showing results after year of efforts," the word process should have read progress in both the lead and second paragraphs.

In the May 25 story titled "Nonprofit awarded \$100,000 to handle housing program," George Egan was incorrectly identified in the cutline. We regret the errors.

Watchdog group: 3 area projects are turkeys

TALLAHASSEE – A nonprofit watchdog group that tracks state spending reports that at least three Clay County projects placed in the new state budget are turkeys.

The 2017 Florida TaxWatch Budget Turkey Watch Report identified 111 appropriation items worth \$177.8 million in the 2017-18 Fiscal Year Budget that qualify as "Budget Turkeys."

The independent scrutiny of the state budget finds that it contains more than 700 member projects worth more than \$600 million. While all these member projects are not budget turkeys, the sheer size of these expenditures is noteworthy.

Budget Turkeys are items, usually local House or Senate member projects, that are

added to the appropriations bill during the budget conference that circumvent established competitive review processes. The Budget Turkey label does not judge a project's worthiness, just the manner in which a project was funded.

Clay County turkeys include, a \$600,000 request from the City of Green Cove Springs to repair the boat ramps at historic Spring Park, a \$400,000 request from Clay County to improve Camp Chowenwaw Park, and a \$2.75 million request for funds to build "Railroad and Safety Improvements" on County Road 220.

This year saw what is likely a record number of local member transportation projects that are

not in the DOT Work Program being put in the budget, according to TaxWatch. When a house or senate member places a road project in a budget, they are circumventing established methods for vetting road projects, a process usually involving metropolitan planning organizations, local governments and the federal government.

"The new rules adopted by the Legislature did improve the transparency and accountability of member projects, but it did not limit them," said Kurt Wenner, Florida TaxWatch vice president for research. "\$600 million is a lot of money, especially when there are underfunded budget issues that can help all Floridians."

During the 2017 Legislative Session,

the House and Senate agreed to joint rules that prohibited a project from being added during the budget conference. Florida TaxWatch found that only a handful of projects made it into the budget during conference. While falling short of the goal of no conference additions, this is still a very positive improvement, as projects being added in conference have become epidemic and have made up the lion's share of past Florida TaxWatch's Turkey Watch Reports, states a Florida TaxWatch press release.

While there were few of these projects this year, there were many that bypassed competitive review and selection processes. Of the 111 Budget Turkeys, 79 are transportation projects that are not in the Department of Transportation Work Program. These projects are worth a combined \$139.4 million.

The House also required each project to be requested in a bill dealing only with that request, and in order to be included in the House budget, the bill had to be approved by one committee. The House adhered to this rule, but all appropriations bills that came before committees passed, in most cases with no discussion or debate.

"We hope our report will help the Governor in his deliberations on the budget," said Dominic Calabro Florida TaxWatch president and chief executive officer. "If he does call the Legislature back into special session, appropriations from vetoed projects could be used to fund VISIT FLORIDA and Enterprise Florida, increase the size of the Business Rent Tax cut, or increase per-student funding public school funding."

Tourism

from page 4

their family follows the same principle.

The decision to slash tourism marketing funding and create barriers to VISIT Florida's success negatively impacts every single Floridian. Less marketing means fewer visitors and fewer visitors means less tax revenue to fund necessary public projects such as schools, beaches, parks, roads and other infrastructure. Even if the entire \$61 million cut were dedicated to other programs, the impact would be minimal. For example, according to FDOT, \$61 million would construct only 4 miles of urban interstate – in a state with nearly 1,500 miles of interstate. On a larger scale, the \$61 million cut from VISIT Florida's budget would fund state government operations for just five hours out of the year. Invested in marketing the state, however, those same funds would generate over \$160 million in new state and local tax revenue that could support transportation, education and senior services. It is also important to note VISIT Florida represents a minuscule portion of the state's budget, yet any decrease

in funding will result in significant ramifications. Even if VISIT Florida were funded at Governor Scott's recommendation of \$100 million, 98.7 percent of the state's budget would be left for other priorities.

I live and work in the small coastal community of Amelia Island, a community that is twice as dependent on tourism as the average Florida county. We are especially concerned about the budget cuts' impact to rural communities. To a degree, large urban destinations, mega resorts and world-famous theme parks can rely on global brand recognition, but many of Florida's hidden gems will be left without the resources to market themselves. For Nassau County, the potential impacts are frightening.

Tourist spending generates 37 percent of the sales taxes generated here. Over 25 percent of the workforce have jobs in the hospitality business. Tourist spending provides a net gain of \$40 million to County government, saving every household in the County \$2,748 in state and local taxes. If tourism declines, it means fewer jobs, fewer services and potentially increased taxes on residents.

Just as in Nassau County, other hard-working Floridian families will suffer, too.

A TaxWatch study analyzed the economic impact of the new tourism promotion budget, and found that reducing funding to \$25 million means a loss of at least 5 million tourists. With a 5 percent tourism downturn, every household in Florida would have to be taxed an additional \$1,535 a year to replace the lost state and local taxes generated from visitor activity. Perhaps even more disheartening are the 70,000 jobs that will be lost due to fewer visitors.

Our hope is that before tourism losses mount in 2018, legislators will reverse course and fully fund a marketing effort that maintains our status as the Earth's most popular family destination. If not, jobs will be lost, small businesses will be harmed and tax revenue will be diminished. Objectively evaluating the return on investment clearly proves tourism works for Florida – and supporting it financially is a wise move for all our citizens.

Gil Langley is chair of the Florida Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, the statewide association representing county tourism promotion agencies. His column appears courtesy of FloridaPolitics.com.

History

from page 4

about a band of 60 peacocks they said were turning their peaceful homes into an ugly mess.

20 years ago, 1997

- An 18-member committee of citizens and school district officials recommended new boundaries for the 1997-98 school year. It included reorganizing high schools from 10th through 12th grades to 9-12 and junior highs from grades 6-8 to grades 7-8 except for Green Cove Springs Middle School.

- Jerry Mallott of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce said Clay County should plan for growth along the Branan Field-Chaffee Road corridor as it moves

closer to becoming a limited access toll road.

- Residents of the Grove Park area of Orange Park protested a plan to improve the intersection of DeBarry and Gano Avenues by posting a wooden sign stating, "Thinking of buying a house in Grove Park? Know the facts first."

30 years ago, 1987

- The Board of County Commissioners passes a resolution allowing Hurst Communications Inc. of Kansas to offer cable TV service to residents of Lake Asbury and Clay Hill, but would not compete directly with Clay Cablevision.

- Concerns about safety forced the Keystone Heights City Council to delay opening of Keystone Beach for the summer.

- Former U.S. heavyweight boxing champion Larry Holmes addressed Lake-

side Middle School students about the dangers of drugs.

40 years ago, 1977

- Clay County officials and area pastors attended a groundbreaking ceremony for the 60-acre Holly Hill Cemetery fronting Old Jennings Road.

- Missing for two days, the Clay County Sheriff's Office and Green Cove Springs Police Department joined forces to search for 9-year-old Kimberly Whitfield of Lake Asbury who was last seen leaving Green Cove Springs Middle School.

- County Zoning Administrator Jim Catlett announced the county had received a \$30,000 grant to help fund the development of the county's first-ever comprehensive plan that would serve as a roadmap for future growth and development in Clay County.

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MEMORIAL DAY



CAMP BLANDING



From left retired Maj. Gen. Ronald O. Harrison, former adjutant general of Florida, State Rep. Bobby Payne(R-19) of Palatka and Post Commander Col. Matt Johnson.



Cadets from the Florida Youth Challenge Academy, which is based on Camp Blanding, played an integral role in celebrating Memorial Day.



Kara Spyros of Fleming Island opened the ceremony with the National Anthem.



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Megan Wolf



Ryan Hilliard



Lillian Dinkins



Evan Engelbrecht



Dinuo Yang



Elizabeth Coen

53 students graduate from St. Johns Country Day School

ORANGE PARK – St. Johns Country Day School welcomed 53 new graduates into the ranks of its more than 2,000-strong alumni last weekend with its 2017 commencement.

The official festivities began with a baccalaureate service on May 26, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Ortega. The Rev. Ken Herzog delivered an invocation that combined Christmas carols, rap music and former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to encourage students to consider their past, and their path, in the context of faith, hope and love.

When you leave home, he asked graduates, do you want your parents to say "Gee, I really miss him" or, "Man, I'm glad he's gone"? Headmaster Zehner read the name of each graduate and a sense of gravitas descended on the

gathering: Graduation is here.

Saturday evening, graduates, friends and family arrived at the Thrasher-Horne Center for the Arts in Orange Park for the 2017 commencement ceremony. The graduates, according to St. Johns tradition, donned long white dresses and white tuxedos, and gathered on stage for awards and commendations.

Student-elected speakers Lisette Coll-Román and Allie Wilson delivered heartfelt remarks, and diplomas were presented by president of the Board of Trustees Jonathan Montgomery.

"We are the product of our teachers work and effort," said Coll-Román, "our family's love and support. They've held our hand up to this point, but, it's time to let go." Now it's time for this "wild, amazing ride" that we know

as our St. Johns education to end, continued Wilson, but the great adventure that is the rest of our lives is just beginning.

Many students were honored with academic, athletic, and service awards, including the following:

Megan Pearl Wolf is class Valedictorian, Ryan Michael Hilliard and Lillian Lee Dinkins were honored with the Roddey R. Fisher Award, Lisette Coll-Román was awarded the Stephen F. Russey Award for Best All-Around Young Woman and Evan Charles Engelbrecht was honored with the Stephen F. Russey Award for Best All-Around Young Man. Dinuo Yang won the Dora Helen Skypek Award and Elizabeth Joann Coen was honored with the Dr. Edwin Paul Heinrich Award.

College Update

Orange Park students named to spring Honor Roll

BREVARD, N.C. – Two Clay County students were among those honored for academic excellence this spring at Brevard College.

Gary Josey Jr. and Shawn Schoenfeld, both of Orange Park, were named to the spring 2016-17 Honor Roll.

Students who qualify for the Honor Roll must be enrolled in at least 12 semester hours and have a GPA of 3.0 to 3.49.

Founded in 1853, Brevard College is the longest ongoing private academic institution in Brevard, North Carolina. The College remains intentionally small and offers a range of distinctive baccalaureate degree programs on its beautiful residential campus.

Seven students named to Columbia College Dean's List

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Officials at Columbia College announce that seven Clay County students were named to the Columbia College Dean's List for spring semester.

Danielle Lindsay and Wallace Paschal, both of Fleming Island, Shana Bell, Roy Brown and Giovanni Charlton Crowl, all of Middleburg are joined by Robert Bardroff and Matthew Sherrill, both



of Orange Park, all were named to the Dean's List.

To be named to the Dean's List, a student must have completed 12 semester hours in a 16-week period and achieved a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0-point scale.

Founded in 1851 in Columbia, Missouri, Columbia College is a private, non-profit, liberal arts and sciences institution, the college takes pride in its small classes, experienced faculty and quality educational programs. With more than 30 locations across the country, students may enroll in day, evening or online classes.

Bursey graduates from Worcester Polytechnic Institute

WORCESTER, Mass. – A Middleburg student was among more than 1,000 students awarded degrees at the 149th Worcester Polytechnic Institute commencement ceremony held May 13. Blaine Bursey of Middleburg was awarded a bachelor of science degree in mathematical sciences.

This year's undergraduate address was given by Rodney Brooks, chairman and chief technology officer of Rethink Robotics. He urged graduates "to focus on three nouns: compassion, contribution, and community" as they chart their course through life, and to be open to the ability of others to enrich their lives in unexpected ways.



Founded in 1865 in Worcester, Mass., WPI is one of the nation's first engineering and technology universities. Its 14 academic departments offer more than 50 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts, leading to bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

Maxey graduates from Georgia Southwestern State University

AMERICUS, Ga. – Timothy Maxey of Fleming Island graduated from Georgia Southwestern State University during the Spring 2017 Commencement Ceremony held May 4 in Convocation Hall of the Student Success Center. Maxey earned a bachelor of business administration in accounting and was one of 250 graduates.

The commencement speaker was John Watford, president of South Georgia Technical College and an alumnus of GSW.

Founded in 1906, Georgia Southwestern State University is a public, four-year unit of the University System of Georgia with 3,000 students. Georgia Southwestern offers outstanding professional programs of study as well as degrees in the arts, humanities, sciences and graduate programs in business, computer science, education, English and nursing.



Milla named to Dean's List for spring 2017

BOSTON – Pablo Milla, a resident of Middleburg, has been named to the Emerson College Dean's List for the Spring 2017 semester.

Milla is majoring in theatre and performance at Emerson College. The requirement to make Emerson's Dean's List is a grade point average of 3.7 or higher.

Located in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,750 undergraduates and 750 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries.



Memorial

from page 1

Payne(R-19) of Palatka.

Payne said it was an honor for him to return to Camp Blanding for this day of remembrance. As a child, Payne spent many weekends and summers at the camp while his father, Lt. Col. William H. Payne, taught officers' cadet school there. A member of the 9th Armored Division of the U.S. Army, William H. Payne was only 17 when he signed up to fight in World War II and "just a few days shy of his 20th birthday" when his division would land on Utah Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Payne said Memorial Day is an opportunity "for us to pause as we're reminded of the greatest sacrifices that the men and women of the armed forces have made and still make for us today."

There is a growing sentiment in the U.S. that people have forgotten the meaning of Memorial Day. Many view this celebratory weekend as merely the kickoff of the summer season, however, those who served take the day of remembrance seriously.

"This entire Memorial Day weekend should have been filled with a spirit that Americans share when we celebrate our past," said retired Maj. Gen. Ronald O. Harrison, former Adjutant General of Florida, addressing the celebration.

"These dedications are a reminder that all Americans, young and old, should see and have appreciation for. I hope our school children will be exposed to it across this land and come to understand those incredible times in our history," Harrison said.

First celebrated as Decoration Day in the years after the Civil War, Memorial Day did not become an official federal holiday until 1971.

Harrison said that every time he visits an historic battle site, he is reminded of the spirit of the American soldier and the courage they mustered to fight and die for their country.

"You see that spirit every day when you see these magnificent soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast guardsmen on the news," Harrison said. "They have something special in today's society, but it's not unique to those who wore the uniform throughout our history. It's a spirit that inculcates a strong set of values – determination and duty, commitment, patriotism, professionalism, honor, selfless service, loyalty, moral and physical courage."



At the same time Harrison encouraged attendees to remember those who died in service, he said it's as equally important to remember U.S. service men and women who are on active duty today. He said there are thousands of U.S. military currently serving in more than 80 countries.

"Today, thousands of those serving around the world are National Guard and Reserve of all military services," Harrison said.

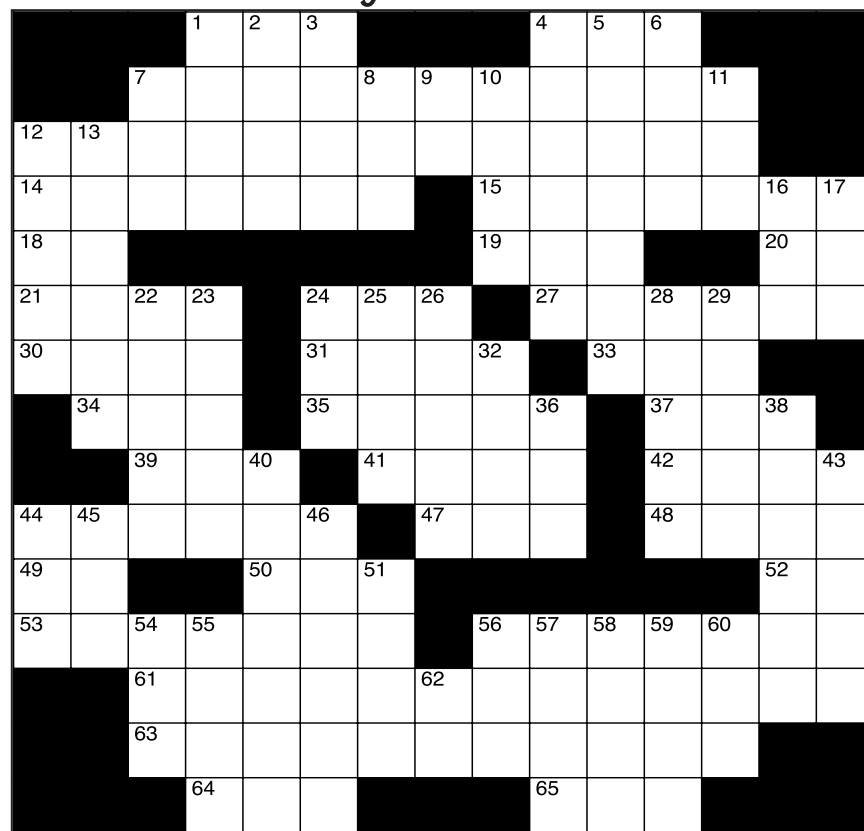
"Right here in North Florida certainly multiples of hundreds and maybe thou-

sands of your neighbors have symbolically rallied on the green and assembled at the bridge as the militia did in 1775, when they put down the plowshare, left their shops and homes, picked up a musket, and literally ran to the sounds of the guns, all to answer the call to arms and take their place in history."

Harrison also encouraged guests to take time to honor the families of the service members who died in combat as part of Memorial Day.

"Our heart and gratitude is with them," he said. "We hope that through this remembrance, we can give strength and comfort those whose loved ones have died serving our country. Their work is done. Ours isn't."

Weekly Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

1. Formed by burning tobacco
4. Luxury automaker
7. Religious residences
12. Crusaders
14. Puzzled
15. In a curt way
18. Selling tool
19. Solid material
20. Gold
21. Thick piece of something
24. Pouch
27. 'Wonder Years' actor Fred
30. Strong and healthy
31. Waste matter
33. Apply lightly
34. Type of squad
35. Secret political faction
37. Mock
39. Immoral act
41. Early Syrian kingdom
42. Neutralizes alkalis
44. Loud, confused noise
47. Sweet potato
48. Yemen's largest city
49. Farm state

CLUES DOWN

1. Used in perfumery
2. Arabic man's name
3. Assess
4. Prickly plants
5. Falsely assess
6. '___ the whistle'
7. Mama
8. Rocker ___ Vicious
9. Toward
10. Prefix meaning within
11. Midway between south and southeast
12. Cause to be embarrassed
13. Pandemonium
16. Fall behind

17. Cantonese
22. Shad
23. A way to make dark
24. Specialized systems consultant
25. Wings
26. Taxi driver
28. Linear units
29. Large Philippine plant
32. Celebration
36. Fugitives are on this
38. Chinese tree
40. Not sour
43. 'Bourne' actor Matt
44. Former OSS
45. Runners run this
46. Offered again
51. Sanctuary
54. Food suitable for babies
55. Caused by a reflection of sound
56. Mortar trough
57. Days in mid-month
58. Exhibit the courage to do
59. Disk of the sun in Egyptian mythology
60. Protects from weather
62. Manganese

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Artist is 'big kid' at heart

By Kile Brewer
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – As a student, Orlando-based artist Leigh Alfredson got a D in chalk pastels, but that didn't really bother the young graphic designer. Then her dad bought her a set of chalks for Christmas in an effort to enlist her artistic talent for a sidewalk mural at a Rotary Club event.

SEE CHALK, 19

STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER
Fleming Island fifth grader Skylar Ward works on a chalk mural on the sidewalks at Fleming Island Elementary School last week. Ward's family friend and Disney chalk artist Leigh Alfredson gave a presentation at the school on chalk art.




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Obituaries

Cherie Lynne (Smith) Angel

Cherie Lynne (Smith) Angel, 56, passed away in Jacksonville, Fla. at St. Vincent's Hospice. She was surrounded by family and friends.

Cherie was born on June 18, 1960 in Peoria, Il. to Jerald E. Smith and Lucille A. Smith. Cherie graduated from Suwannee High School.

She is survived by her brothers Michael E. (Carol) Smith and Steven J. (Marlene) Smith. Her son Jason M. (Leigh) Smith, daughters Kelly



Cherie Lynne (Smith) Angel

L. Angel, Jamie L. (Eugene III) Perkins. Grandchildren Cassidy P. Smith, Kaitlynn M. Smith, Eugene C. Perkins IV, and Mikayla M. Perkins. Nephews and nieces Jason A. (Tabitha) Smith, Alisha Smith, Carol A. Smith, Samantha K. Smith

Memorial services will be held at First Baptist Church Middleburg, 2645 Blanding Blvd. from 6-8pm on June 2, 2017.

CMSgt. Craig James Cavanaugh

CMSgt. Craig James Cavanaugh, USAF (Ret.) 79 of Middleburg, Fla., passed away May 28, 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



John Robert "Bobby" Stephenson

John Robert "Bobby" Stephenson, 53 of Middleburg, Fla. passed away May 25, 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



Johnnie Ruth Dillard

Johnnie Ruth Dillard, 74, of Middleburg, Fla., passed away May 26, 2017. Please sign the family's guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000.



Community Briefs

Clay County rescinds burn ban

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – With the recent countywide average rainfall of 3 to 6 inches, Clay County is rescinding the Local State of Emergency County Burn Ban effective midnight on May 29.

Clay County Emergency Management urges residents to use caution, as "we could quickly fall into the same dry conditions we experienced just a couple weeks ago," stated a news release.

Residents are asked to pay close attention to local media and sign up for emergency alerts at ALERT.claycountygov.com.

One of the more effective ways to reduce the possibility of wildfires is to clear underbrush or debris. These dry plants and vegetation create more fuel for wildfires and particularly cause the wildland to interface close enough to homes thus making it more vulnerable to wildfire. Wildfire prevention tips include:

- Prune all branches around the residence to a height of 8 to 10 feet. Keep trees adjacent to buildings free of dead or dying limbs and moss.
- Remove all dead limbs, needles and debris from rain gutters.
- Avoid open burning completely, especially during this dry season.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers and rubbish.
- Rake leaves, dead limbs and twigs. Clear flammable vegetation from around and under structures.
- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Store flammable materials in approved safety cans.
- Keep items available that can be used as fire tools, such as a rake, handsaw, chainsaw, bucket and shovel

• Never throw a lighted cigarette from the window of a vehicle or walk off and leave a burning cigarette.

Metrotown Institute deadline extended

JACKSONVILLE – The OneJax Institute at the University of North Florida has extended the Metrotown Institute application deadline to June 2.

This is a four-day program for teens entering grades 10 through 12. The Institute will take place 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, June 12, to Wednesday, June 14, and 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday, June 15, at Riverside Presbyterian Church, 849 Park St., Jacksonville. The program promotes respect and understanding across the differences of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and ability.

Students must be referred to the program or endorsed by a sponsor, such as a parent, teacher, counselor, clergy or community leader. Anyone interested in referring a student should contact OneJax at (904) 620-1529. Students will be required to complete an application to be considered. Applications and additional information can be obtained at www.OneJax.org.

The program is designed for 50 students, who will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration fee is \$150, which includes daily lunch and snacks as well as dinner on the final night.

Sponsors are encouraged to help students raise money to cover the registration fee, although no one will be prevented from participating due to an inability to pay.

Metrotown is supported by the United Way of Northeast Florida and UNF. As an interfaith organization, the OneJax Institute at UNF educates, advocates and builds community to promote respect and understanding that will overcome bias, bigotry and oppression.

Property values increase in Clay County

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Property values in Clay County continue to rise.

Clay County Property Appraiser Roger A. Suggs announced that the taxable value of all properties in Clay County is estimated at approximately \$9.9 billion – an annual increase of more than \$615 million.

Suggs has since submitted the taxable value estimates to the Clay County taxing authorities, a move that allows local authorities to begin crafting their budgets for 2017-18.

The statutory assessment date for the 2017 assessment roll is January 1, 2017. Therefore, the overall increase in value is a reflection of the upward direction the real estate market has taken during 2016. Although market values have increased, the assessed values of properties with a home-

SEE BRIEFS, 14

Obituaries

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Halibuts inched out of national title

By Randy Lefko

ATLANTA – With top five finishes in all three competition categories, the Fleming Island duo of Jordan Mae Detwiler, a freshman at Fleming Island High School, and Austin Hughes, a Lakeside Junior High eighth grader, finished as runners-up in their second shot at the 2017 National SeaPerch Challenge.

There were 99 teams competing from as far away as Puerto Rico and Hawaii, New Jersey and California at the May 19-20 event held at Georgia Tech's aquatic center.

In 2016, Detwiler and Hughes finished fifth overall in the Middle School division.

"Austin and I started this in junior high and we worked well together," Detwiler said. "We did okay in our first try and knew we could improve."

The SeaPerch Program teaches students robotics, engineering, science and mathematics while building an underwater remote-operated vehicle as part of a science and engineering technology curriculum. Throughout the project, students learn engineering concepts, problem solving, teamwork and technical applications. The Office of Naval Research sponsors the program, and it is managed by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International Foundation.

The Fleming Island duo, nicknamed the Hetwiler Halibuts – combining the names Hughes and Detwiler – finished second overall to a team from Puerto Rico by just one point, according to official results.

The Hetwiler Halibuts and Giapac 101, The Academia Ponce Interamericana team from Ponce, Puerto Rico, were the only two teams to score less than 10 points based on their finishes with third place, the EHT PAL Enforcers from Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey, which scored a distant 18 points.

The Halibuts had earned a region quali-

fier first place two months ago after competing in South Florida with astounding performances in the SeaPerch disciplines.

"We didn't know many of the teams going to nationals, but teams knew about us because we had won the region qualifier with a near-record time on the Obstacle course," Detwiler said. "We knew the competition would be good so we just tried to stay focused on what we practiced."

Giapac 101 earned the top score of eight points with two first place scores in the Obstacle course, an underwater timed event that tests the remote operator's ability to maneuver their module through a series of hoops positioned at different heights and distances apart, and in the notebook session, a spiral bound notebook detailing the team's preparation and objectives of participation.

The Halibuts, who had qualified in a region event in Fort Lauderdale a month ago, got a second overall with nine points with a second in the notebook competition, a fourth in the obstacle and a third in the challenge, a second underwater task pitting the module operator against a submerged rack with various angled pipes made of PVC anchored to the floor of the pool. The module operator's task was to put rings and cubes on to the rack in the shortest time possible.

In the obstacle course, Hughes was the module operator for the Halibuts and scored a one minute, 8.06 second time to finish fourth overall with a team from Burbank, Calif., Team Maverick, which scored a 1:03.12 time.

"The course was different than the ones we had set times of 30-35 seconds and I figured the times might be slower," Hughes said. "When it came up a minute, I was a little irritated, but the other teams were all just over a minute also."

For Giapac 101, their best time was a sixth place 1:13.16 with Santa Rosa High



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY TERI BRIGGS

Lakeside Junior High eighth grader Austin Hughes, left, and Jordan Mae Detwiler, a freshman at Fleming Island High, show off their trophy for the Challenge course at the 2017 SeaPerch Nationals held May 19-20 at Georgia Tech. Hughes and Detwiler finished second overall in the high school division.

School's Panther Sea team splitting the two teams for fifth in 1:10.97.

In the second and third place slots, the times were closer at 1:06.34 getting second and 1:06.69 for third.

With the Halibuts and Giapac 101 keeping an eye on each other during each phase of the competition, Detwiler would handle the challenge course for the Halibuts with a time near three minutes the target.

"I was so nervous my legs were shaking," said Detwiler. "I had to sit down near the end to put my final cube on the rack."

Giapac 101 had the fastest time of the day at 2:40.59 in the afternoon rounds at 2:20 p.m. with Detwiler set to perform at 3 p.m. knowing where her time had to be.

"We didn't really talk much about us and them because they posted the fastest time of the day, but it did not say who ran that time," said Hughes. "They were pretty excited when they finished and the time popped up about 10 minutes after they finished. It was not hard to figure who had the time."

In the challenge course, operators could score a maximum of 32 points with all the rings and cubes attached to the underwater rack. The top 15 finishers all achieved the 32-point total. That left time elapsed to be the deciding factor.

In her session of the challenge, Detwiler moved quickly to get her rack filled and completed the round with her top point

total, 32, ever and, in 3:02.75, her fastest time ever. Detwiler had a 27-point total as her previous best.

"The 27 was my best in competition, but I was doing 32s in practice," Detwiler said. "Our module is pretty quick and agile and I was kind of in the zone moving the pieces into position."

In the final scoring, Detwiler's time gave the Halibuts a third place finish in the event, well ahead of fourth place's 4:06.11, but just eight seconds off of second place.

"I was giving her time updates when she got close to finishing," Hughes said. "I knew it was going to be close."

Also performing at 3 p.m. in the challenge course were the Starkville Robo-Jackets of Mississippi who were located just three lanes away from Detwiler and Hughes. Starkville edged Detwiler for second, but finished fourth overall with 24 total points coming from a 16th place time in the obstacle.

Next year, both Detwiler and Hughes intend to improve their module and their technique to try and wrest away the first place trophy.

"It was a weird feeling when they announced us as second place," Hughes said. "We'll just go back, see where we made mistakes and retool our module and come back even faster."



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Talks again in the works

An airport for northern Clay County?

By Kile Brewer
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Thirty years after first talking about the idea, county officials are getting more serious about the idea of a county airport in northern Clay County.

County Commissioner Gayward Hendry reminded everyone of this at a recent luncheon with the county's constitutional officers. When it was his time to speak, Hendry only wanted to say one thing to the board, and he repeated those words several times in an effort to get them stuck in the minds of everyone in attendance.

"Regional airport," Hendry repeated, like a mantra, for attendees. "I try to plant this seed everywhere I go."

Hendry and the Clay County Board of Commissioners are in total support of the idea, and recently inquired to Clay County Port Inc. about a study to determine whether or not this would be a good move. Hendry said the former Lee Air Field navy base and its runway would be the perfect place for a county-owned airport.

"The county looked at this option in 2001 and decided it was not cost feasible at that time, and they had done a similar study about 15 years before that," said Ted



The Reynolds Industrial Park at the Clay County Port. Talks are underway to determine how feasible it would be to convert the runway there to a commercial municipal airport.

McGowan, executive director of the Port.

McGowan said that the owners haven't decided what they want to do, but Hendry thinks this is as good a time as any with the First Coast Expressway making its way to the area as soon as January of 2019 when construction on the southern segment of

the roadway gets underway.

"The point I've been trying to stress is: we've got waterways, and (with the Expressway) roads, all we need is an airport to make Clay County a complete transportation hub," Hendry said. "Everyone's talking about it. With the [Expressway] being

built right next to it, we've got a successful project waiting to happen. This is long overdue."

The proposed site is Reynolds Airpark, a runway outside Green Cove Springs that was built for training U.S. Navy pilots during World War II. The park was decommissioned in the 1960s and has been privately owned by Clay County Port Inc. since.

The facility currently has a 5,000-foot runway, and after some repaving and renovations, could support a variety of private and cargo jets.

The site is ideal for the type of airport that Hendry envisions, but there is a lot to be done before paving trucks take to the tarmac and contractors start installing infrastructure and buildings to support air travelers. The pre-planning is such a robust undertaking that, after 30 years of discussions and conversation, Reynolds Park hasn't changed drastically.

"We're looking for a starting point," Hendry said. "We need a plan to put in place."

Even if there was a plan, the construction of the Expressway could put a pin in the airport project if the Florida Department

SEE AIRPORT, 14

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Briefs

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stead exemption will be limited or 'capped' at a 2.10 percent increase (excluding any additions or improvements) and non-homestead residential and commercial properties will be limited or 'capped' at a 10 percent increase due to constitutional amendments passed by voters in 1992 and 2008, respectively. Taxable value is based on the market value minus differentials ('caps') and exemptions.

Robust permit activity and new construction are contributing factors in the taxable value increases in the county and most taxing authorities. Although new construction is still significantly lower than the peak in 2006 – a year that experienced a value of \$650 million – the taxable value of new construction has remained positive over the past five years, adding over \$196 million during 2016.

Increases in the taxable value for the various taxing authorities in Clay County include:

Board of County Commissioners: 6.25 percent

School Board: 6.00 percent

Green Cove Springs: 7.25 percent

Orange Park: 3.50 percent

Penney Farms: 7.0 percent

Keystone Heights: 3.25 percent

St. Johns River Water Management District: 6.25 percent

The Property Appraiser's Office is required to provide a certification of taxable value to the Florida Department of Revenue and local taxing authorities on July 1.

Fish fry to raise funds for David White Law Enforcement Scholarship

FLEMING ISLAND – Clay County residents are invited to help raise money for the Detective Dave White Memorial Foundation, which provides scholarships to Clay teens.

The fun begins runs from 3:30-5 p.m. on June 3 at Whitey's Fish Camp on County Road 220.

All funds help provide scholarships to students in honor of Detective White, who was killed in the line of duty while investigating a meth lab in February 2012. Fish Fry tickets are \$5 each, and includes a fish sandwich, French fries, coleslaw, hushpuppies and tea. To-go boxes are available.

There will also be a raffle for a reel, Yeti items, t-shirts, and Challenge Coins. To purchase tickets, contact Kim Cox at kim.cox@myoneclay.net

The purpose of the Detective Dave White Law Enforcement scholarship is to memorialize Detective White for the character and reputation he carried as well as the positive lifestyle he lived.

This scholarship will award one or more recipients financial assistance to attend the St. Johns River State College Law Enforce-

ment Academy. The award amount will be up to \$3,300 per academy class. This fund may be used for tuition, fees, books, equipment and supplies for the law enforcement program. Awards will be granted on a competitive basis.

Applications and all other details for the scholarship can be obtained at the Orange Park Police Department, the Green Cove Springs Police Department, the Clay County Sheriff's Office and the Law Enforcement Academy at the St. Johns River State College. Completion of the application process and meeting all qualifications is mandatory to be considered for this scholarship.

For questions about the scholarship contact, Randy Case at rcase@townop.com, Shawn Gordon at sgordon@claysheriff.com or Chris Hess at chess@gcpsd.com

Hospice earns new star in National We Honor Veterans Program

JACKSONVILLE – Community Hospice & Palliative Care recently attained Level III Partnership in We Honor Veterans, a program of veteran-specific caring techniques developed by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Veterans Administration.

In addition to meeting prior We Honor Veterans milestones, to attain Level III status the organization had to develop a process to assist veterans with their VA benefits and provide information and resources on other veteran services. The organization was also required to match veterans who are undergoing hospice care with volun-

teers who also served in the military.

"I am honored to be a Community Hospice volunteer visitor to many former members of the military," said Timothy Lynch, Community Hospice volunteer and retired Navy Captain who spent his 32-year career flying jets after receiving his Navy Wings in 1963. "Two noteworthy veterans come to mind – one who served as a gunner in a USN patrol plane during WW II and the other landed in the invasion of Europe at Omaha Beach and fought all the way to Berlin. Men like these and their comrades in arms, most now passed away, will always be heroes to me as men and women of the "Greatest Generation.""

There are currently 88 former members of the military volunteering at Community Hospice and available to help with the program. In addition, as part of the admissions process, the organization had to implement a "Military History Checklist" and report the demographic information related to the patient's service history to the We Honor Veterans national program.

Military veterans can experience the end of life differently than those who didn't serve. For some military veterans, the psychological effects of combat can remain dormant for years, only to re-emerge when they are facing their own mortality.

It's important to provide specialized care that honors their service and the unique physical and emotional challenges they may face. Hospice physicians, nurses and counselors are trained and to identify these needs and assist in the healing and resolution process for veterans and their loved ones.

Animal Rescue Movement Pet Adoptions



Gracie

Gracie is a sweet little pot-bellied pig looking for a great home. She was fostered, bottle-fed, is great with people, and is about six-eight months old. Gracie loves her piggy food, carrots, lettuce, and green beans! A chin rub, shoulder scratch and a little chat time --what a great little girl she is. She's up to date on her piggy shots, and is ready for a family of her own again. Call the shelter for more information on Gracie, and leave a message -- we'll get back to you as soon as possible -- at (904)282-7888. Look at our Facebook page for more pictures of Gracie, and our dogs and cats, at facebook.com/animalrescuemovement.



Cindy

Cindy is our shy, sweet little grey Chihuahua lady -- about eight years old and such a doll. She does wonderfully with other little dogs, but is protective of her food! She wants nothing but you hugs, your lap to sit on, your love, and listens to everything you say. Cindy is a wonderful companion and loves being loved!! Email info@animalrescuemovement.org for more information, or check our website, http://www.animalrescuemovement.org to see Cindy 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



Bella

Bella is a six year old Dachsund, a shy sweet girl that loves to curl up in a blanket and snuggle. She is spayed, up to date on all her shots, heart worm negative and micro chipped. She bonds quickly with people and loves a romp in the yard. She is house trained and does well with the other small dogs. Email info@animalrescuemovement.org for more information, or check our website, http://www.animalrescuemovement.org to meet Bella 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. Make sure to visit our Facebook page for more pictures and talk about our animals!



Panda

Panda is a handsome three year old Dachsund mix, and a super sweet, shy little man. He is neutered, up to date on all shots, heart worm negative and micro chipped. He loves a good run in the play yard, gets to know you quickly and is a smart boy. Panda enjoys a good neck rub and time with his person! Email info@animalrescuemovement.org for more information, or check our website, http://www.animalrescuemovement.org to meet Charlie 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. Make sure to visit our Facebook page for more pictures and talk about our animals!

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.)

Airport

from page 13

ment of Transportation takes part of the property as right-of-way for the highway. According to Hendry, the Expressway property could totally block the airport.

However, according to McGowan, the current alignment of the Expressway has moved the intersection of the highway with U.S. Highway 17 further south, as previous plans would have created an interchange that would block the Reynolds runway from ever expanding.

With the current alignment, there would be nothing stopping Clay County Port from expanding the runway to accommodate

larger planes and a municipal airport.

"I think people are interested," said County Manager Stephanie Kopelousos. "Right now, the Port is negotiating with DOT. After they get through that, the group has to focus on what they are willing to do with it, because we don't own it."

In addition to coordination with DOT, McGowan said there were some restrictions put on the Reynolds Airpark property by the Navy before turning it over to private ownership. At the time of sale, the Navy had restricted the property from ever being used as an airport, but, last fall, Clay County Port was able to get those restrictions lifted.

McGowan said that nothing will happen just yet, but as for the future, "I think that at some point it will."

Hendry first publicly floated the airport concept on Jan. 30 when he addressed the annual meeting of the Clay County Legislative Delegation. Sen. Rob Bradley (R-Fleming Island) fielded Hendry's comments with hope saying "let's begin that conversation." In May 1987, FDOT and Clay County worked to jointly fund a feasibility study for the airport that ended in no municipal airport.





Bell named Citizen of the Year

ORANGE PARK – Known in many circles as the “Science Fair Lady,” Lillian Bell was recently named 2017 Citizen of the Year by the Orange Park Rotary Club. Her involvement in the Clay County Science Fair, which was started in 1995, came from her membership in the Kiwanis Club, which held the science fair as a small event at the Orange Park Mall. Today, she is involved in all aspects of any science project she is involved with, from planning, organizing, coordinating, scheduling, set-up to clean-up afterwards. She held every office the Kiwanis club had to offer moving up the ranks to Lt. Governor where she represented the district for a year. Since moving to Clay County in 1964 from Jacksonville, Bell has served on various committees at Orange Park United Methodist Church, the Shepherd’s Center Board for six years, as secretary as well as chairperson. Here, she is shown receiving the award from Club President Larry Klaybor.



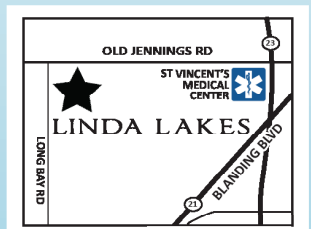
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STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

A car attempts to pull onto Henley Road through cones and barricades after county officials were forced to close down southbound lanes due to pavement settling and shifting on the road.

Road

from page 1

shifting, and due to the high amount of traffic traveling through each day, that shifting could become worse if left alone.

"The problem we're having with the road is lateral movement," said County Attorney Courtney Grimm about the problem area between RideOut Lane and Asbury Terrace. This means that the wall stabilizing the road has begun to move from side-to-side, something that could be a serious problem for the relatively new section of blacktop.

According to the county's website, the county is working with the engineer of record, RS&H, and the roadbuilding contractor, Haskell, on a possible solution to the problem. County documents show the road project cost \$14.8 million.

The closure notice states specifically that, "A design is being finalized for the repair," but that design may be on hold for the time being.

"There are pilings with a platform on top," said County Manager Stephanie Kopelousos. "We're deciding whether to fix the platform, the pilings, or both."

According to Kopelousos, there has been some disagreement between the contractor and engineer as to what may be the correct solution to the problem. Until all those involved can come to a unified decision as to how they should move forward, the road will remain partially closed.

"In any situation like this, safety of the public is a concern first and foremost," said Dave Balz, a Haskell spokesman.

Balz went to say that their company would try to find the best possible solution alongside RS&H and the county. He did not speculate that there would be any litigation brought up against any parties involved.

Clay County Commissioner Gayward Hendry's district covers the imperiled

roadway where the detour has been enforced. Hendry, notoriously critical of government red tape and foot-dragging, wants to see a solution for this problem soon.

"The problem is faulty construction," Hendry said. "We're trying to determine who's responsible."

There has not yet been litigation filed by the county, but officials seem to believe that either the engineer or contractor will be responsible for the repairs to the road. There is currently no end in sight as talks of lawsuits continue, but for now the road will remain closed in the interests of the safety of citizens travel-

ing along the faulty section of Henley between county roads 218 and 220.

"We closed the road to prevent a potentially catastrophic road failure," Hendry said. "I don't care who fixes it as long as it isn't [paid for by] Clay County taxpayers."

For now, the project is at a standstill. No one can provide any information, or even speculation, on when the road will be fully operational again. What is being billed as a temporary fix may be temporary for a while as the county, engineer, and contractor determine what needs to be done to ensure the road doesn't continue to deteriorate.



Signs and construction barrels block southbound lanes along Henley Road after county officials closed the lanes due to the road's lateral movement. The county is currently involved in talks with the engineer and contractor to figure out how to stabilize the roadway.



Faith Walk

Dr. William P. Register
First Assembly Fleming Island

The Silver Poodle

When Lisa, my now adult daughter, was about 7 or 8 years old, she decided she wanted a silver poodle. Her mother and I were against it, but she continued to ask for the little dog. Over and over she begged for the pet she so desperately wanted.

One day she brought home a story she had written as an assignment in school. She titled it, "The Silver Poodle." It was about a little girl who wanted a silver poodle more than anything in the world. But her parents would not get her one.

It was a sad story. And it touched our hearts. So, with a new understanding, my wife and I discussed getting her what she wanted most. The following Saturday, we went out and bought her a beautiful silver poodle.

She named him Pierre. We soon learned that Pierre was a mean dog. He hated children. He was constantly growling, barking and snapping at everyone in the family except me. By default, I soon became responsible for his care. One day he bit my hand and that was the end of Pierre's welcome in our family.

At various times as they grew up, my children had pets. Mostly they had dogs. They had big ones and little ones. All the pets are remembered. We still talk fondly about them and how our hearts were broken when we lost them. We remember Pierre, differently.

A lot of things in life do not turn out the way we expect. Sometimes the thing you want the most may not be the best thing for you. You may have a "silver poodle" today. You finally got something you wanted more than anything. You were willing to do anything to have it. You believed it would make you happy. Now you have it and you realize it would have been better if you had never received what you wanted most!

Live to have what God desires for you. He has a good plan for you. Come to the place in your life that you want what God wants for you. You will then be in joyful contentment.

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MEMORIAL DAY

FLEMING ISLAND



STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

Clay County Economic Development Corp. President Bill Garrison delivers a speech to the crowd at the Clay County Memorial Wall located in Fleming Island Business Park May 26 during a Memorial Day ceremony.



TOP: Members of the Fleming Island High School U.S. Navy Junior ROTC program served as the color guard last week during a Memorial Day ceremony at Fleming Island Business Park.
 RIGHT: Keynote speaker Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels, left, and U.S. Rep. Ted Yoho(R-3) honor the flag Friday during a Memorial Day ceremony held at Fleming Island Business Park.



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Chalk

from page 10

Alfredson, doubtful of her skills, tried out the chalk and discovered her natural ability for packing color onto concrete and making brilliant two-dimensional images come to life.

In 1995, a couple years after receiving that first set of chalks, Alfredson was asked by Disney to produce the first of



Chalk artist Leigh Alfredson helps Fleming Island Elementary School students blend two shades of blue in the background of a chalk art piece they were making while Alfredson taught a chalking workshop at the school last week.

many large-scale murals in their parks. When Disney opens a new attraction, or holds a movie premiere, Alfredson creates murals as big as 12 feet square, bringing the characters to life on the sidewalk outside the venue.

After years of kneeling on pillows, blending various hues together in dreamy chalk masterpieces, Alfredson learned that the only thing that brought her as much joy as chalking was teaching younger artists her trade. She now travels the country delivering about 25 chalking lectures at schools every year.

"What I've found I like most, after 22 years of chalking, is teaching kids to do it," Alfredson said.

About three years ago, Fleming Island Elementary School student Skylar Ward

was at Downtown Disney with her family. They walked up to a chalk artist who was creating a mural for the, then new release of the hit film "Frozen."

"I was fascinated, I watched her for a long time," Ward said. "After a while she asked if I wanted to chalk and I said 'Absolutely!' and it kinda went from there."

Now, Alfredson is a family friend to the Wards, and has even made appearances at one of Skylar's birthday parties. Ward has her own chalks at home and practices the skills that Alfredson has taught her.

"I really like how [chalk] blends so well," Ward said. "It's so beautiful. You can do really amazing things with these little chalk pieces."

Ward is enamored with the medium, so, when Alfredson approached the Wards and her school's art teacher Joy Keith about doing a workshop, everyone was immediately on board.

After a brief presentation about the history of chalk art at the school on May 25, Alfredson demonstrated some basic chalking techniques, provided cardboard stencils to the students, and then set them loose with a partner and a box of chalk.

Among the art pieces, there was a great variety of color and subject. Even though the students were choosing between about five rough cardboard stencils, they were able to create incredible variety on the sidewalks that connect all the buildings of the school's campus.

The walkways were decorated with various sea creatures – dolphins, crabs, turtles and mermaids.

Chalk-covered hands smeared ocean blues on clothing and faces, but the students were all involved, and all seemed to be at home seated on the ground rubbing chalk onto concrete.

"I was most excited to get art out of the classroom where people can see it," Keith said as she walked among dozens of three-foot by two-foot chalk pieces created



STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

Chalk artist Leigh Alfredson helps Fleming Island Elementary School students blend two shades of blue in the background of a chalk art piece they were making while Alfredson taught a chalking workshop at the school last week.

by Fleming Island Elementary students. "Some of these students aren't that into art, so to see everyone this engaged is pretty neat."

After the kids had nearly finished their artwork, Alfredson retreated to a small area near the school's front gate to start on a medium-sized piece featuring the school's mascot, a stingray. After teaching the kids the history and basics of chalk art, Alfredson produced a piece for the school that they can enjoy for a few days, or a few hours if it rains.

Alfredson worked quickly, with a

rhythm to her movements. The students gathered around, waiting to be released to their next class, as the artist knelt, stooped and straddled the outline of the ray, filling in the ocean background to the taped perimeter she had confined herself to. Blue chalk streaks became reflections, scratches in shades of gray became a stingray, and the students were humbled and impressed with the work.

"I never grew up," Alfredson said to the kids without taking her eyes off the work in front of her. "When it comes down to it I'm just a big kid having fun."

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UF helps slow the cycle of food-insecurity, obesity

By Brad Buck
UF/IFAS

GAINESVILLE – LaToya O’Neal and others at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences are trying to ensure that all people can buy nutritious food and, in turn, curb obesity among those with limited daily access to healthy food.

Those who go day to day with little to no access to nutritious food are food-insecure, O’Neal said.

About 13 percent of American households experienced food-insecurity in 2015, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That is 29.1 million adults and 13.1 million children. Within that group are more than 3 million Florida residents.

Research by the Food Research & Action Center shows that those with access to fresh foods tend to eat healthier diets and therefore are at a lower risk for obesity, a complex condition that can lead to cardiovascular and other chronic diseases. According to the Florida Department of Health, 26 percent of the state’s residents are obese, a disease heavily influenced by your diet.

In a new Extension document, O’Neal discusses low food security, defined as a decrease in diet quality or preference



without a change in food consumption. She also explains the connection between people who are food insecure and obese.

Many food-insecure families live in food deserts, in which residents live far from a supermarket and have limited transportation, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“When you consider the circumstances that are typically associated with food insecurity, you can understand the connection between food insecurity and obesity,” said O’Neal, a UF/IFAS assistant professor in family, youth and community sciences. O’Neal’s research and Extension programs aim to promote weight-related chronic disease prevention and management.

“To address food choice, we would educate individuals on the importance of making healthier food choices,” she said.

For example, O’Neal and her colleagues

will share with consumers the benefits of eating fresh or frozen produce, which are typically lower in sodium than the canned variety. They will also encourage reduced consumption of sugary beverages and fried foods.

Community discussions also offer a good platform to help stop the cycle of food-insecurity and obesity, O’Neal said.

“This would allow us the opportunity to work with residents to problem-solve,” she said. “For example, we could teach residents how to budget for healthy eating

and how to apply for assistance when applicable.”

Additionally, UF/IFAS can identify community partners and organizations with whom to work so they can better address food insecurity, O’Neal said. As examples, O’Neal cited partnerships that could bring farmers’ markets to food-insecure areas.

“Collaborating with other community and health-focused organizations to increase access to healthy foods has been beneficial in other areas where I have worked,” O’Neal said “For example, healthy corner store initiatives, which involve supplying corner stores with fresh produce, have had some success in low-resource communities.”

UF/IFAS Extension offers a free Family Nutrition Program to beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. FNP implements SNAP-Ed nutrition education to teach participants how to shop efficiently, eat healthier and become more physically active.


Visit your local Extension office for more information.

READ IT ONLINE
www.claytodayonline.com

Brutus
Meet Brutus ... We rescued him out of Clay County Animal Care And Control back in February of this year. Brutus is a 2 1/2 year old Hound Mix and he really is such a sweetheart and he loves to play. He loves to go on walks and walks GREAT on a leash. If you are out and about, why not stop by and visit him for yourself. His adoption fee is \$125 and that includes all his vaccinations, his neuter, his microchip and the first year of microchip service ... he is also heartworm negative!! Come meet Brutus and see for yourself at Safe Animal Shelter at 2913 County Road 220 in Middleburg at the corner of Knight Boxx Road. We are open Wednesday through Sunday from Noon to 5pm.



Alley Kat
Alley Kat ... We transferred her out of Clay County Animal Care And Control back in February of 2016. Alley is an almost 2 year old BEAUTIFUL domestic short hair gray tabby with streaks of cream running through her soft fur. She was adopted at the end of last year and brought back due to no fault of hers ... the new owners other cat didn't like her and she felt guilty so she brought Alley back. Ever since then Alley Kat has been sad and a bit aloof but we honestly believe that she will return back to her old loving and snuggling self once she is out of the shelter environment ... she just needs that person or family willing to take the chance for her!! Are you that person or family? Why not come on over to Safe and see her for yourself!! Her adoption fee is just \$85 and that includes ALL her vaccinations, her spay, her microchip and the first year of 24PetWatch microchip service.



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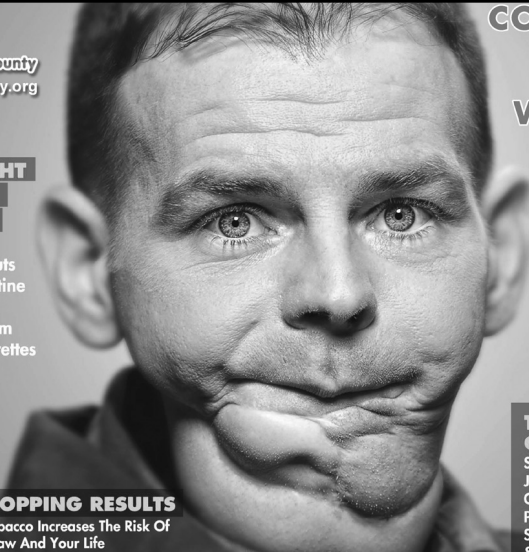
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Police Briefs

Shots fired from car ends in felony arrest

CLAY HILL – A Clay Hill man is being held in the Clay County Jail on \$100,006 bond after his arrest on charges of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and firing a gun from a vehicle within 1,000 feet of another person.

Police arrested Derek Shane Carter Jr., 20, on May 24 at 6:17 p.m. in the 4500 block of Peppergrass Street after an investigation.

According to a Clay County Sheriff's Office report, Carter fired shots out of his vehicle at a Kangaroo station in the 4400 block of County Road 218 toward another vehicle on North Mimosa Avenue and Mandrake Street. The police report states the shots were fired shortly after 3 p.m.

Police said Brandon Wright, an acquaintance of Carter's who was inside the Kangaroo during the incident, said the shots were meant for him. The police report states that while Wright was driving home from the Kangaroo, Carter's vehicle pulled up beside his and Carter fired shots towards the car. Wright said he parked and ran into his house on Mandrake St, police said, and Carter pulled into the driveway before heading down North Mimosa Avenue.

According to police, an officer identified Carter's car and pulled the vehicle over for a traffic stop on Peppergrass Street. The report states an officer searched the car and found a firearm and two spent round casings on the windshield.

Amanda Carter, identified in the police report as Carter's sister, was in the car during the traffic stop. According to the police report, Wright told officers he used to date Amanda Carter.

Police said James Robbins was gathering tools for maintenance to the Kangaroo's roof when multiple shots were fired toward him from a vehicle. The police report states Robbins later identified the shooter on Peppergrass Street and Carter was arrested.

According to the police report, Wright was not injured and there were no bullet holes in his car.

Man falls asleep in car, ends in arrest

MIDDLEBURG – Police arrested a Jacksonville man on Blanding Boulevard early Wednesday morning after reports of a man sleeping in his car while parked at a stoplight.

Donald Collister Cook, 32, faces charges of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon on a law enforcement officer,

fleeing and eluding police, driving under the influence of alcohol and resisting arrest, according to a Clay County Sheriff's Office report. The incident occurred around 4 a.m. on May 24.

Police say an officer approached Cook's vehicle at the intersection of Blanding Boulevard and Baxley Road and when Cook ignored the officer's requests to open the door, the officer reached for the door handle. According the police report, Cook drove away with the officer's hand stuck in the door handle.

"As I was struggling to free my hand, I had to run alongside the vehicle to prevent falling and possibly getting run over by the vehicle," the officer said in the police report.

Once free, the officer followed the car, the police report states, and the car passed through constructions barrels and drove in closed roadway lanes before stopping. Police say Cook ignored requests and the officer removed him from the car by force. Cook agreed to speak with police following the arrest, police said, but mumbled and did not answer the officer's questions. A breath test given shortly after the arrest showed a blood alcohol content of .160, double the state level of .08 percent blood-alcohol content.

At press time, Cook remained in the Clay County Jail where his bond is set at \$57,510.

Liquor store employee charged with stealing from boss

ORANGE PARK – A former Wells Road Liquors employee was arrested last week on charges of grand theft, forgery and passing a forged check, according to a Clay County Sheriff's Office report.

Police said Wells Road Liquors owner Lorraine Smith told officers that Marisol Benitez Iraso, 41, took a \$10,800 check from the business. Smith fired Iraso on May 11 under suspicion of wrongdoing, the police report states. Iraso was charged with one count of grand theft valued \$10,000-\$19,999 on May 24 at 11:40 a.m.

Police said Smith completed fraudulent activity paperwork and police confirmed banking records showed the check, which was made out to Sam's Club and was deposited into Iraso's account on May 11.

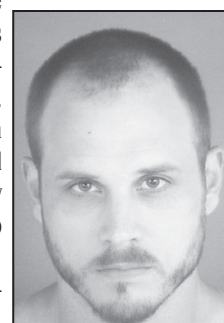
Officers contacted Iraso by phone and



Donald Cook



Derek Carter



William McCarthy

asked her to come in for an interview, police said. The police report states Iraso was arrested at the Clay County Sheriff's Office on Blanding Boulevard and she was transported to the Clay County Jail. She since been released on bond.

CCSO makes witness tampering arrest

ORANGE PARK – An investigation led authorities to arrest a man at a Blanding Boulevard apartment complex late Wednesday on charges of domestic battery, false imprisonment and tampering with a witness.

According to the Clay County Sheriff's Office report, William John McCarthy, 32, shut a woman in the bathroom and took her phone away limiting her ability to call for help.

Police said officers arrested McCarthy on May 24 at 11:47 p.m. while responding to complaints of a disturbance at the InTown Suites hotel near Orange Park shortly before midnight.

According to police, a security guard let the officer into the apartment after there was no answer to knocks on the door. Once inside, McCarthy left a bathroom and put him in restraints, police said. The police report states the officer found a frightened woman in the bathtub with the shower cur-

tain closed. Police said the woman told the officer she came to the apartment to pick up her belongings when McCarthy shoved her inside the bathroom and closed the door. When she tried to text her boyfriend, who was waiting outside the apartment, the police report states, McCarthy took her phone. The woman told officers she had a child with McCarthy and had lived with him previously.

According to the police report, the woman's belongings were stacked as if she was coming to pick them up, but there were no signs of a struggle. Police said McCarthy agreed to speak with the officer and he was transported to the Clay County Jail. At press time, McCarthy remained in jail where his bond is set at \$37,508.

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Students play role in making sure police dog is street ready

By **Kenneth Detwyler Jr.**
Correspondent

FLEMING ISLAND – With the help of local elementary school students, one of Clay County's newest and furriest deputies is now ready for duty.

On Wednesday, Fleming Island Elementary School's Robotic Rays hosted special guests from the Clay County Sheriff's office K-9 unit, something that most people wouldn't generally associate with a robotics club.

"My favorite part of robotics club is getting to be with all my friends, working together to solve problems, and getting to do the community service projects, it makes me feel really good," said Ethan King, 11.

Robotics clubs have grown in popularity in the Clay County School District and they have the same mission of teaching students computer skills, coding, leadership and service. This year's theme was "animal allies," with each club choosing to help an animal-based cause. Fleming Island Elementary's robotics club decided to take on an ambitious project.

"We picked an animal that could be a friend to us, and it was a police service dog," said robotics club advisor Penny Turner. Turner is also a science teacher at the school. Following a K-9 demonstration held earlier in the school year, the club set their goal to raise \$700 to purchase a bullet proof vest for a CCSO K-9, a 2-year-old German Sheppard named "Bull."

"It's so different and unique and they

really did need a vest," Robotic Rays president Layne Barlow, 12.

The Robotics clubs in the school district had a competition among themselves to see which club had the best fundraising idea. The Robotic Rays did not win the competition and many people involved with the club didn't think they could possibly reach their goal.

However, students spent months selling 50-cent lollipops after school. There were hours of hard work from parent volunteers. There were also some students like Justin Holt, 11, who asked his father to take the donation box to work. Eventually, that hard work paid off and the club met its goal.

"It's so amazing to know that these kids have worked so hard to come up with this to help their community," said Jamie Kirk, a parent volunteer.

According to CCSO deputies at the ceremony, Bull will be the only K-9 to have a vest that isn't expired.

Due to budget constraints, equipment, such as vests, for their four-legged deputies aren't easy to update.

Thanks to students like the ones at Fleming Island Elementary, Bull and hopefully future police dogs will receive the best protection available.

"We have people from all over calling and asking about the vests now, and we're going to see about getting some other vests donated from throughout the community, said CCSO Sgt. Albert Lundin. "It's great to see kids this young have a great interest in protecting the dogs that serve the county.



PHOTOS BY KENNETH DETWYLER JR.

Fending off their detractors who doubted they could raise enough money, the Robotic Rays of Fleming Island Elementary raised \$700 to buy police dog Bull a bulletproof vest as a community service project. He is shown here with his handler partner CCSO Sgt. Albert Lundin.



Arrests & Bookings

Tuesday, May 30

Bell, Shakita, 35, Jacksonville, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Boggess, Elizabeth, 43, Dunnellon, Fla., CCSO, VOP - DUI With Property Damage
 Ford, Wade, 30, Jacksonville, CCSO, Sale of Cocaine, Sale of Marijuana
 Fountain, Diego, 23, Orlando, Fla., CCSO, Writing a Forged Check, Grand Theft \$300-4,999
 Gonzalez, Nico, 24, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR, FTA - No Motor Vehicle Registration
 Holloway, Lexus, 22, Jacksonville, CCSO, VOP - Grand Theft
 Jackson, Desi, 24, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR
 Lawrence, Rasheed, 25, Jacksonville, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999, Communications Fraud for Communicating With Others One's Intent to Obtain Property Via Scheme
 Lowe, Candace, 51, Middleburg, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Robinson, Randy, 19, Orange Park, CCSO, FTA - No Valid Driver's License
 Smith, Janaris, 18, Jacksonville, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999, Communications Fraud for Communicating With Others One's Intent to Obtain Property Via Scheme
 Stover, Glen, 35, Lake Butler, Fla., CCSO, Non-Support
 Touchton, Shawna, 30, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft, Drug Equipment Possession, Two Counts of Dealing Stolen Property, Two Counts of Petit Theft
 Usewicz, Jeremy, 41, Middleburg, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court
 Watson, Dangelo, 18, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession

Monday, May 29

Blanco, Yesenia, 22, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Corrigan, Andrew, 26, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Hall, Eugene, 71, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR
 Knight, Skyler, 19, Middleburg, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Lahey, Riona, 18, Fleming Island, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Lubin, John, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, Resisting an Officer, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Marolf, Stephen, 55, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Mitchell, Codarah, 29, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery, Violate Injunction For Protection
 Overby, John, 29, Jacksonville, CCSO, Two Counts of Simple Domestic Battery, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Drug Equipment Possession
 Taylor, James, 35, Middleburg, CCSO, Two Counts of Violate Probation -

Community Control

Thompson, Charvez, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession, DWLSR

Sunday, May 28

Ford, Brenda, 49, Fleming Island, OPPD, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Gonzalez, Jesus, 48, Spring Hill, Fla., CCSO, Failure to Stop and Remain at a Crash Involving Serious Injury, Duty Upon Damaging Unattended Vehicle, DWLSR, DWLSR - Commercial Vehicle
 Hogg, Tabitha, 32, Elkton, Fla., OPPD, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Pokorny, Wayne, 62, Orange Park, CCSO, DWLSR
 Reyes, Bidkart, 41, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Simple Domestic Battery
 Santiago, Luis, 50, Jacksonville, CCSO, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon
 Sowers, Mark, 56, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Battery
 Wilkerson, Christopher, 28, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR

Saturday, May 27

Crews, Oscar, 41, Jacksonville, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, DWLSR, Possession of a Controlled Substance
 Goodin, Noah, 35, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Johnston, George, 51, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Journey, Ian, 28, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Petit Theft
 Lewis, Derrick, 27, Jacksonville, OPPD, Petit Theft
 Perkins, Jessica, 35, Jacksonville, CCSO, DWLSR
 Raven, Albert, 25, Orange Park, OPPD, DWLSR
 Smith, Robert, 39, Orange Park, CCSO, DWLSR
 Smith, Stephen, 44, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR, Trespassing, FTA - DWLSR, FTA - Leaving the Scene of a Crash
 Smyczynski, Matthew, 41, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., OPPD, Habitual Traffic Offender

Friday, May 26

Banville, Jonathon, 27, Middleburg, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Blanton, Jeffrey, 40, Middleburg, CCSO, Burglary, Grand Theft \$300-4,999
 Charlton-Crowl, Jovanni, 25, Orange Park, CCSO, Domestic Battery
 Dellapenna, Peter, 31, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Doherty, John, 51, Middleburg, CCSO, FTA - Domestic Battery, FTA - Resisting an Officer With Violence
 Frey, Marc, 26, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Dui With Property Damage, DWLSR

Hayes, Hunter, 23, Orange Park, CCSO, Two Counts of VOP - Possession of Hydromorphone
 Hollett, Camron, 21, Jacksonville, CCSO, Burglary
 Kohn, Morgan, 22, Orange Park, CCSO, Two Counts of Driving a Motorcycle Without a Valid License
 Leggett, Christopher, 36, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - Reckless Driving
 Lillis, Sean, 44, Fleming Island, OPPD, DUI
 Scurti, Craig, 36, Orange Park, CCSO, Two Counts of Violate Probation - Community Control
 Shaw, Reginald, 33, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR
 Spencer, Adam, 34, Middleburg, CCSO, Non-Support
 Walden, Gregory, 37, Middleburg, CCSO, Misuse 911 or E911 System
 Willoughby, Jeremy, 35, Middleburg, CCSO, FTA - Criminal Mischief

Thursday, May 25

Arocho, Andres, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Drug Equipment Possession
 Blanton, Jeffrey, 40, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft, Resisting an Officer
 Evans, Jasmine, 23, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR
 Johns, David, 27, Middleburg, CCSO, Non-Support
 McRae, Cindy, 49, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, VOP - DUI
 Miller, Cory, 31, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Simple Battery
 Millhone, Tyler, 26, Jacksonville, CCSO, DUI
 Oberdeck, Peter, 28, Middleburg, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court
 Perry, Jennifer, 48, Jacksonville, CCSO, Failure to Redeliver Hired Vehicle
 Sumner, Christopher, 43, Middleburg, CCSO, Fugitive From Justice

Wednesday, May 24

Anderson, Cayon, 19, Starke, CCSO, Burglary
 Bailey, Jeffery, 20, Jacksonville, CCSO, VOP - Possession of a Controlled Substance, Two Counts of VOP - Sale or Delivery of Cannabis
 Barbre, Joseph, 43, Orange Park, DEA, Cocaine Distribution, Drug Equipment Possession, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis
 Baxter, Tracy, 44, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft
 Boyd, Joan, 37, Orange Park, CCSO, Two Counts of Failure to Appear for Court
 Carter, Derek, 20, Maxville, CCSO, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon, Discharging a Firearm From a Vehicle
 Cook, Donald, 32, Jacksonville, CCSO, Aggravated Battery With a Deadly Weapon, DUI, Resisting an Officer, Fleeing and Eluding a Law Officer With Lights & Siren Active
 Deel, Jonathan, 20, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Vandalism \$1,000+, Trespassing, Breaking a Fence
 Figueroa, Ashley, 23, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - Carry Concealed Firearm Violation
 Iraso, Marisol, 41, Middleburg, CCSO, Forgery, Passing a Forged Check, Grand Theft - Value 10,000 To 19,999
 Lucas, Wy'Te, 20, Palatka, CCSO, Burglary to Auto, Petit Theft
 McCarthy, William, 32, Orange Park, CCSO, Domestic Battery, Adult False Imprisonment, Tampering with a Witness
 Neumann, George, 22, Fleming Island, CCSO, Trespassing, Vandalism \$1,000+, Breaking a Fence
 Sluder, Decoda, 20, Jacksonville, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control
 Smith, Keith, 25, Orange Park, CCSO, DWLSR
 Taylor, Arielle, 27, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery
 Tobler, Herbert, 32, Palatka, CCSO, Failure to Appear in Court

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They came from the water Aquatic midges and you

By **Wayne Hobbs**
Environmental Horticulture Agent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – If you live near water, you are likely dealing with aquatic midges, also known as “blind mosquitos” right now. These small nuisance insects can often be found swarming around outdoor lights or dead along your patio and deck. While they may be annoying, there are some things to consider before you attempt to control them.



Wayne Hobbs

How do they live?

The term aquatic midges describes several species of the family Chironomidae that begin their lives as eggs laid on the surface of bodies of water near the edge, usually sticks or vegetation. Depending on the exact species, these egg bunches can range from 10 up to several hundred eggs. When they become detached from their mass and sink, the eggs will then hatch

into small, worm-like larvae that burrow down into the mud.

After around 2-7 weeks, the larvae will pupate for a few days and then actively swim to the surface to emerge as adults. The adults will emerge the pupae and will live their 3-5 day existence, living only to mate and never actually feeding on anything. After they mate and the female lays eggs, the adults die. This entire life cycle can take as short as two weeks but can last much longer when conditions are not favorable.

Why are they important?

Aquatic midges can survive in many areas other aquatic insect larvae cannot, making them a great indicator species. If you find nothing but aquatic midge and mosquito larvae, there may be pollution issues in the waterway. However, they are still an important part of the ecosystem, serving as a major food source for fish and other aquatic organisms. One midge, the hydrilla tip-mining midge has even led to a decline in the invasive hydrilla plant.

With that being said, these can be a major annoyance for homeowners as their breeding swarms can be massive, making outdoor activity difficult. In addition to



this, they are often attracted to developed areas, seeking cool, dark spaces such as vegetation during the day and then swarming lights at night. Once they die, they can also coat decks and patios and their smell can be reminiscent of rotting fish.

How can I control them?

Larval control is not feasible as you would need to treat the entire body of water, including the bottom, so do not attempt to use any products on waterways to kill the midges. There are some products that can be used to spray surfaces that can persist over time and kill the midges as they land. Please contact your local UF/IFAS Extension Office for recommendations or check product labels to find one labeled for aquatic midges. Always follow all label in-

structions and precautions.

Overall, the best option for control is to improve the ecosystem in the waterway because as the water quality and biodiversity improves, there will be more predators to eat the larvae. Some things you can do to help water health is to avoid dumping any chemicals on your property, fertilizing the proper amount for your lawn and landscape, and making sure that sediments and grass clippings do not run-off into the water. You can also consider planting a buffer strip of plants around your water frontage if possible.

If you have any questions, contact the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Office online at (904) 284-6355.



PHOTOS BY PAT GARLINGHOUSE

Spring Park

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – While construction on the entire park has yet to be fully completed, residents had a chance on Memorial Day to play in the new Splash Park portion of Historic Spring Park. City officials hope to have the pool and park open by Independence Day.

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CALENDAR

CODE ENFORCEMENT: The Clay County Code Enforcement Special Magistrate Hearing will be June 1 at 9:30 a.m. in the Board of County Commissioners' Meeting Room, fourth floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE: Meets June 1, June 8, June 15, June 22, and June 29 at 10:00 a.m. in the Zoning Department Conference Room, 3rd Floor of the Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.



FOOD DRIVE: The Middleburg Black Creek Lions will collect food for local food banks on June 3 at the Winn Dixie in Lake Asbury from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. For information or questions, contact Ed Dickson (904) 254-7891.

MOTHBALL FLEET: June 3 at 10:30 a.m. Friends of the Green Cove Springs Library present guest speaker Frank Haggard who will discuss the "Atlantic Reserve Fleet, Green Cove Springs" at the Green Cove Springs Branch Library, 403 Ferris St. Haggard will give a brief history of the base and the ships kept here complete with photos, video, and several models of these ships as well as one airplane. Free and open to the public.

TOUCH A TRUCK: June 3 from 9-11 a.m. in the Sears parking lot at Orange Park Mall, presented by Clay County Emergency Management. First two hours are noise-free for sensitive ears. This free kid-friendly event lets kids meet the pros who help the community in times of disaster.

VVA MONTHLY MEETING: Vietnam Veterans of America Clay County Chapter 1059 meets June 3 at 11 a.m. at the Middleburg American Legion Post 250, 3959 County Rd. 218. The VVA meets the first Saturday of each month.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE Meets June 6 at 3 p.m. and June 20 at 3 p.m. in the BCC meeting room, fourth floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.

PLANNING COMMISSION: Meets June 6 at 6 p.m. to conduct a Workshop regarding major issues to be addressed in the update of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The meeting will be followed by the Planning Commission's regular monthly meeting at 7 p.m. Both meetings will be held in the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room, fourth floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Both meetings open to the public.

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June 3 from 9-11 a.m. in the Sears parking lot at Orange Park Mall, presented by Clay County Emergency Management. First two hours are noise-free for sensitive ears. This free kid-friendly event lets kids meet the pros who help the community in times of disaster.



FAMILY FUN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LUNCHEON: June 8 at the Thrasher-Horne Conference Center in Orange Park, the Clay Economic Development Corp. hosts its 2nd Quarter Economic Development Luncheon. Frank DiBello, CEO of Space Florida, and Florida Trend's 2017 Floridian of the Year, will be keynote speaker. Tickets available at www.chooseclay.com.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT: Holds its regular monthly meeting June 9 at 9 a.m. at the Clay County Extension Office located at 2463 State Rd. 16 W, Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.



DRUG TAKE BACK: Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies will collect used prescription medications, June 10 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Walgreens, 1565 County Rd. 220, Fleming Island. Sharp items, liquids and creams will not be accepted.

STOP SMOKING CLASS: June 10 from 2-4 p.m. at The Way Free Medical Clinic, Houston Street, Green Cove Springs. Get free patches, lozenges, or gum plus a free quit plan, workbook, water bottle, stress ball and more. Call to register and learn about more classes near you: Northeast Florida Area Health Education Center, (904) 482-0189.

"TOUGH PLANTS: TOUGH CONDITIONS" June 12 at 10 a.m. presented by the Garden Club of Fleming Island with guest speaker, Wayne Hobbs, Clay County Environmental Horticultural Agent at the Clay County Extension Office, 2463 State Rd. 16, Green Cove Springs. Free and open to the public. Info, (904)-264-3986.



FREE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:

First Presbyterian & St. Mary's Episcopal Churches invite all 4 year olds through completed 6th graders to join us for "HERO CENTRAL" VBS. June 12-16 from 9 a.m.-noon, Monday-Friday. VBS will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 300 Gum St., Green Cove Springs. Come join the fun with crafts, music, bible story, recreation, science, etc. Register at: 2017.cokesburyvbs.com/firstpresgcsfl. If you have any question, please call (904) 284-9261.



COMPOSTING WORKSHOP: June 13 from 6-7:30 p.m., the "Composting in the Garden" workshop is for those interested in recycling household and yard waste to enrich their soil. University of Florida/IFAS Clay County Extension, 2463 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs. Register at clayextension.eventbrite.com or call (904) 284-6355.

PRIVATE APPLICATOR PESTICIDE LICENSE REVIEW COURSE: June 15 from 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., UF/IFAS Clay County Extension Office, 2463 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs. Registration is \$25 at <https://ClayExtension.eventbrite.com>. Come learn how to become certified as a pesticide applicator for agricultural commodities on your own private land.

LEGALLY BLONDE: Presented by Orange Park Community Theatre, 2900 Moody

Ave. to benefit Quigley House, June 15 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$30. Steve Conrad, (904) 284-0340, extension 320 or sconrad@quigleyhouse.org.

FLAG DAY DINNER: "Boots, beans and BBQ" to benefit the Republican Party of Clay County, June 17 with 6 p.m. social hour, 7 p.m. dinner, Clay County Agricultural Center, 2463 State Rd. 16, Green Cove Springs. Invited guests are Rep. Ted Yoho(R-3), Adam Putnam and Mike Cella. \$40 per person. Info, Gary Cross, (904) 463-0265.



HONOR GUARDS DAY PARADE: June 24 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., behind JC Penney at the Orange Park Mall. This free event honors the sacrifices made by those who wear the uniforms:

planning the service of our fallen, marching and presenting the colors with honor, standing over our fallen in all weather, and comforting those in duress. Tentative guest speakers are Gov. Rick Scott and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio. Info, Donald Crutch, (407) 949-1931.

WATERING WORKSHOP: June 24 from 9 a.m. until noon, "Watering the Right Way" is for those interested in optimizing their irrigation or installing drip systems. University of Florida/IFAS Clay County Extension, 2463 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs. Register at clayextension.eventbrite.com or call (904) 284-6355.

FREE CONCERT: Concert in the Cove to benefit the Vineyard, a new homeless shelter coming soon to Green Cove Springs. June 24 at 7 p.m. at Shiloh Baptist Church, 1055 County Rd. 220, sponsored by the Vine Fellowship. Info, (904) 305-4641.

MASTER GARDENER: The UF/IFAS Clay County Master Gardener Program will be holding its annual plant sale on Sept. 9 from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. There will be many varieties of landscape plants available along with food and craft vendors, free workshops, and activities for kids. University of Florida/IFAS Clay County Extension, 2463 State Rd. 16 West, Green Cove Springs.

FLAG FOOTBALL: July 29 at 9 a.m., Dye Clay YMCA, Moody Avenue, benefit for the Derek Hatcher Foundation to raise awareness about substance abuse and addiction. Looking for sponsors and teams to play in the QB-5 Flag Football Tournament. \$200 for men's competitive team with \$500 prize to winner. Info, (904)707-3839 or hatcherfoundation@gmail.com.

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Clay Cinderella season ends

Blue Devils lose to Mosley 3-0 in region final

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

PANAMA CITY BEACH – Clay High baseball has run the gauntlet of baseball with success from scrappy base running and tough defense and the two identities emerged briefly, but not successfully as the Blue Devils fell 3-0 to top-ranked Mosley High of Lynn Haven in the region 1-6A championship baseball game played May 25 in Panama City Beach.

“I can’t say enough about the effort and passion that these guys played with all season,” said Clay coach Josh Persinger, who finishes at 18-11. “We just didn’t get runs across the plate like we have.”

Clay’s region playoff runs production has been impressive with back-to-back 13 run winning efforts in the region quarters and semis; 13-4 over Stanton and 13-2 over Paxon, but the Mosley defense was stifling on Thursday night.

“Their second baseman was making some great plays and they got to some long hits we had in the outfield,” said Persinger. “They are a legit state contender each year and we were hoping they would look past us.”

Clay’s opening inning amidst the Mosley favorite crowd displayed the effort the Blue Devils were about to put out as batter Tyler Spence outsprinted a misplayed strike three to put a baserunner in play for the Blue Devils.

“You always think about the opening play in big games like this and that was just good hustle,” said Persinger.

Spence stayed at first with a flyout by Josh Lemen.

Mosley must have read the same playbook in their ups at bat as the Dolphin battling challenged Clay pitcher Austin Burke and the Blue Devil infielders with hard grounders getting two runners to second



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay High pitcher Andy Yarbrough lets go with Mosley base runner on the way to third.

base, but Clay left fielder Ken Burke took on a grounder deep in his territory and threw a rocket to home plate to nail a Mosley scoring effort to squash run potential for the inning and send Clay into the dugout with renewed energy.

“That was a momentum changer,” said Persinger.

Clay opened with Connor Solomon slashing a line drive to centerfield to ignite a Clay offensive, but a superb bunt by Chase Holman was well-played at first base and a flyout by Burke was tracked down by Mosley’s centerfielder who got the ball back to second base to out

SEE CLAY,28



Oakleaf High second baseman Alex Acevedo led stellar infield for champ Knights.

A chat with two state champions: Kelsey and Alex

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

OAKLEAF – After a sterling region playoff reign of five straight games and a 44-1 runs for and runs against record, the Oakleaf High School softball team came home from Vero Beach’s

SEE CHAT, 29



Oakleaf High senior pitcher Kelsey Sweatt found her zone in last five games of her career as a Lady Knight.



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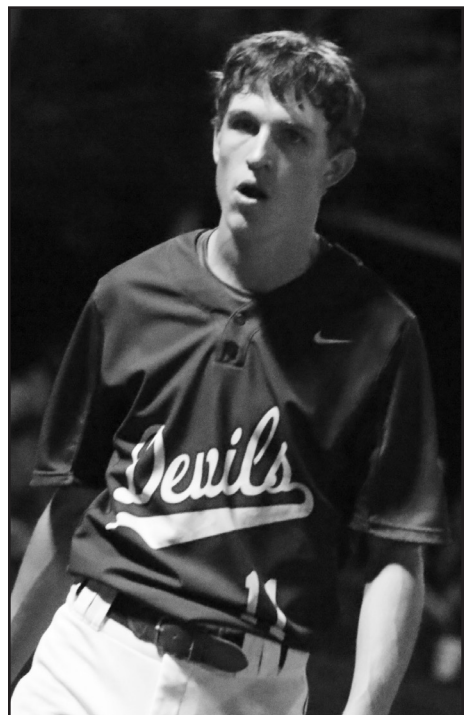
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Clay

from page 27

Solomon as well and end the inning.

Mosley struck first in the bottom of the fourth with a solo homer and looked to add runs with a single to follow that moved to third base off a bunt and a deep right field hit, but Burke and Lemen combined for a crafty pickoff play at third to put the baserunner back in the dugout. Holman caught a foul fly ball to end the inning with Clay seemingly unscathed by the early homer.



Clay pitcher Austin Burke kept the strong Mosley batting lineup at bay for most of the night.

Clay's bats went dead in the ensuing inning with strikeouts to Burke and Burke and a flyout to Andy Yarbrough.

Mosley entered the bottom of the second intent on flicking away the pesky Blue Devils' who seemed to be hanging on against the three time Final Four squad; twice state runnerups 2015-2016, who



Clay High batter Tyler Spence opened up the first inning by outracing a third strike fumble to put the Blue Devils on base and create a stir against the twice state runner-up Mosley High team.

were a bit stymied at the Blue Devil backbone to be down by just 1-0 after three innings.

A hard single to centerfield opened the inning with Austin Burke on the mound with a misplayed pickoff attempt putting the runner on third base. A walk and a hit batter loaded the bases and got Persinger in a conference call at the mound.

A deep fly ball scored one run and a fielder's choice grounder to Lemen allowed a second run for the inning before Austin Burke knocked down a wicked line drive headed to centerfield to leave baserunners

at first and third.

The defensive stand was followed by Cole Escher smashing a single over second base and Spence drawing a walk as Clay looked to retaliate. A walk to Holman off a three balls/two strike count loaded the bases and put Clay fans on the edge of their seats, but Kevin Jackson got robbed of the hero monicker on a great stab at second base on a hard hit grounder that became the final out.

Yarbrough replaced Burke on the mound and got three Mosley batters quickly back in the dugout, but Clay had the same result



Clay High third year coach Josh Persinger has seen his team dig down to overcome scores, but Mosley's defense had just enough edge.

in their at bat.

In the top of the sixth, Clay got some life on the bases with Lemen reaching on an error, but Solomon struck out swinging.

Yarbrough got hit with a single in the bottom of the sixth as Mosley was needing more insurance against the explosive Clay bats and got a single to second base but Blue Devil centerfielder Jacob Owens stole a long flyball near the fence to end the effort and put Clay at bat with a final momentum surge.

Designated hitter Micheal Styron nearly silenced the now-loud Mosley fans with a deep, deep left field fly ball that seemed destined to start a Clay comeback attempt, but the Mosley left fielder track the ball down just outside the foul line in the deepest corner of left field.

Clay ended the inning with a strikeout and chopped groundout.



Clay High gamebreaker Cole Escher got on base for the Blue Devils, here with a steal, but was unable to get across home plate.



Clay High third baseman Josh Lemen made gamechanging tagout on pick play at third base that fused some energy into the Blue Devils dugout.

Chat

from page 27

Dodgertown Stadium with a Class 8A championship trophy.

Two senior members of coach Christina Thompson's team; senior pitcher Kelsey Sweatt and senior second baseman Alex Acevedo talked about the inside motivations of a season of two losses; one to 9A champ West Orange, and 30 wins.

Sweatt and Acevedo were the nucleus of a team of players that have been together since Oakleaf Junior High; outfielders Destiny Pacetti, Tracey Ferguson and Rebecca Koskey, infielder Mika Garcia with catcher Haley Willis, that have been deep into region play since their freshman years and now their state title. New to the recent lineup were sophomore Baylee Goddard at third base and Bishop Snyder transfer Angela Agurkis, a junior, at first base and sometimes at catcher.

Sweatt, with 27 strikeouts for the five-game series and six in the championship final against Wellington High, a 6-1 title win, also had a fielding play on a bunt play.

"Actually, it feels really weird to have to throw the ball over my head instead of underhand," said Sweatt, who has been near the 60-65 miles per hour mark throughout the season, but developed a powerful changeup for the season. "I didn't have as many strikeouts as I had last year because I was throwing strikes and making people hit. I was trusting my defense."

Part of that defense was Acevedo at second base, who was known to come up big with exciting horizontal attacks on grounders and quickness on the basepaths.

"The diving part is just effort and I've always been unafraid to get dirty," said Acevedo. "It hurts a little, but I'm used to it by now. Our whole infield is very competitive and we don't like letting balls get past us."

In the state championship game, Acevedo got on base in the first inning and scored one of the Knight's first two runs for an early 2-0 lead. Part of the Knights' attack is unrelenting attacks on the basepaths with basestealing and intimidation from the threat of a base steal causing enemy pitchers and infielders to have to hurry their steps to catch the likes of Garcia, Acevedo and Goddard after a hard hit to the infield.

"I'm not really that fast from point to point, but more I'm quick on the base paths," said Acevedo, who heads to Florida Atlantic University next fall to continue playing. "Baylee (Goddard) hits long balls and homers and is our power hitter. Mika (Garcia) and Destiny (Pacetti) are also very fast on their feet. Angela Agurkis and Katie Kistler, who is probably fastest of all of us, came on strong in the second half of the season."

Sweatt is heading to University of South Carolina-Upstate, an NCAA Division I power. Both Sweatt and Acevedo plan to study dentistry.

"I committed in my sophomore year after they approached me after a club nationals tournament," said Sweatt. "Upstate



Oakleaf High freshman Katie Kistler will be a key return player next year for the Lady Knights. Kistler came on with a strong bat in the second half of season.



The key element for the success of Oakleaf High pitching fell into the secure hands of senior catcher Haley Willis who has been a teammate of Kelsey Sweatt's for four years.



Oakleaf High's monster infield; here with Baylee Goddard and Mike Garcia in play, returns just Goddard on the hot corner and junior first baseman Angela Agurkis for next year but has a handful of young guns ready to step in and maintain the excellence.

has had some local players."

Both players liked the future of the Knights' team with youngsters returning to fill the gaps of the departing senior stand-outs.

"The next pitchers; Madi Davis and Cambria Arturo are both very good," said Sweatt. "We have a sophomore shortstop coming that will be good. Koskey and Angela Agurkis come back as well as Baylee. That's not a bad returning lineup."

Acevedo thought Agurkis' addition to the lineup added another strong bat with freshman Katie Kistler, though small in size, adding consistent on-base potential with her well-placed hits. Agurkis became a big-hit phenom for the Knights with numerous RBI doubles and triples adding points to the Oakleaf scoring.

In the championship game, with a 2-1 first inning lead, Sweatt was surprised at the closeness of the game until the fateful seventh inning.

"We were getting people on base, but they were very good on defense," said Acevedo. "Their pitcher was young, but had good spin on the ball. She wasn't as fast as we had anticipated and her pitchers were a little slower in her delivery than what we were used to. That's takes a little off the bat and we had to make adjustments. It's harder to hit slower pitches."

In the heat of the games, Acevedo revealed that in their mound meetings that Sweatt was a little harder to read because of her stoic demeanor.

"When we go to her between innings or after a strikeout or good play, she gets in her zone and doesn't hear anything we say," said Acevedo. "We usually give her a 'you got this' but we mostly know she doesn't hear us. In the dugout, Kelsey is very strategy minded in the dugout."

In preparation for Oakleaf's long list of big time opponents, Sweatt said the team does some research off press reports and website notes.

"We look at other teams on paper, but not any film," said Sweatt. "We don't get film or anything. We kind of know what number has been hitting well lately and who the top pitchers are."

One of the more comical quips from the pair was about a hard hit from Agurkis that the Wellington outfielder did catch, but Agurkis was unaware of the catch.

"She sprinted all the way and the pitcher was holding the ball and waiting for her to get off of second base," said Acevedo. "It was a great play by the outfielder."

One aspect of the team's strength, according to Acevedo, was coach Christina Thompson's preseason summer conditioning regimen.

"We did not take any days off over the summer and were not going to take any team lightly," said Sweatt. "We didn't have many off days."

Acevedo thought the collective motivation of the team started in the junior high days with the state title the ultimate goal.

"We all wanted to win state; our senior year was the last shot with no second chances," said Acevedo. "We had to put everything we had into this senior year; everyday."

2016-17

YEAR IN REVIEW **CLAY TODAY**

Basketball

8A Girls: Fleming Island High with district and region titles, loses in state semifinal to South Broward. Winter Haven beats South Broward for title.

7A Girls: Middleburg High with district 3-7A title over Nease High, beats Ocala Vanguard in region quarterfinals then loses to Nease in region semifinals. Nease loses to Fort Walton Beach in region final. Fort Walton Beach loses to Fort Myers in 7A title game.

6A Girls: Clay High wins 6-6A title over Ponte Vedra. Clay wins region quarterfinal, loses region semifinal to Ponte Vedra. Ponte Vedra loses to Lakewood High in state semifinal. Lakewood loses to Ribault in 6A title game.

5A Girls: Keystone Heights wins 4-5A title over Bradford, loses to Fernandina Beach in region quarterfinal. Fernandina Beach loses to Florida High in region final. Florida High finishes as state runnerup to Jones High of Orlando.

6A Boys: Orange Park High wins district 4-6A title over Baker County, then loses to Terry Parker in region quarterfinal. Terry Parker loses to Ribault in region semifinal. Ribault loses to Leesburg in state semifinal. Leesburg wins state title over Mariner High of Cape Coral.



Keystone Heights basketball coach Jessica Carter got the most out of her girls in a district title and a region playoff berth.



Baseball

8A: Oakleaf High finishes as district 2-8A runnerup to Fletcher, loses in region quarterfinal to Lincoln. Lincoln wins region over Wharton to advance to June 2 Final Four against Nova. Sarasota and Hagerty in second Final Four match.

6A: Clay High finishes as runnerup in district 4-6A to Ponte Vedra, beats Stanton and Paxon, but loses to Mosley in region final. Mosley advances to June 1 Final Four against Archbishop McCarthy. Jesuit and Dunedin are in second Final Four match.

5A: Keystone Heights wins district 5-5A title over P.K. Yonge, loses to the Villages in region quarterfinals. Villages loses to South Sumter in region semifinal. South Sumter loses to Bishop Moore in region final to advance to Final Four against Lemon Bay. Bolles and Pompano Beach are in second Final Four match.

3A: St. Johns Country Day School finishes as runnerup to University Christian in district 2-3A, loses to Maclay in region quarterfinal. University Christian beats Maclay in region semifinal, but loses to Canterbury in 3A title game 4-1.

St. Johns Country Day School baseball, here with outfielder Troy Britts throwing in against Oakleaf, battled some of the bigger schools to get set for playoff battles with district and region rival University Christian, who ended as Class 3A runnerup.

Cross Country

4A Boys: Fleming Island High junior Andrew Miller finishes 12th in 16:23.29.

1A Girls: St. Johns Country Day School seventh grader Mackenzie Glenn finished sixth in 19:29.64. Helena Kummings, freshman, finished 14th in 19:55.94. St. Johns finished sixth in team points.

1A Boys: St. Johns Country Day School sophomore Benjamin Kailes finished 25th in 17:21.17. Matthew Stratton, a seventh grader, finished 59th in 17:56.64. St. Johns finished 18th in team points.



Fleming Island dynamic duo; Evan Fuller, left, and Andrew Miller, here at region championship race, were strong finishers for Golden Eagles with Miller top runner in county with a state meet 12th place finish.



Flag Football

2A: Fleming Island won region semifinal over Deland then lost to Dr. Phillips in region final. Dr. Phillips lost to Plant High of Tampa. Plant won state title over Seminole Ridge.

1A: Clay High beat Terry Parker in the region semifinals then lost 13-12 to Choctawhatchee in the region finals. Choctawhatchee lost to Robinson High of Tampa in the state semifinals. Robinson won state title over Miami Edison.

Clay High's girls flag football lost controversial 13-12 decision to Choctawhatchee in first foray into region playoffs.



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Football

6A Middleburg: District 4-6A runner-up to St. Augustine. Lost in region quarterfinal to Crestview. Crestview lost to St. Augustine in region semifinal. Navarre beat St. Augustine in region final. Navarre lost to Lake Gibson in state semifinal. Miami Carol City beat Lake Gibson for 6A title.

5A Clay: District 5-5A champions. Won region championship with wins over North Marion, Baker County and River Ridge. Lost to Ponte Vedra in state semifinal. Ponte Vedra state runner-up to American Heritage.

Middleburg High football had plenty of smiles in turnaround season that included region playoff berth.



Clay High football donned yet another magical Final Four hand sign after region final win over River Ridge. Ponte Vedra beat Clay in state semifinal before losing in Class 5A title game to American Heritage.



Middleburg High's Cody Carroll won overtime match for Class 2A title.

Golf

2A Boys: Cody Carroll, junior, Middleburg High, wins boys individual title in overtime match against Ignacio Arcaya of Bishop Moore with both finishing two rounds of championship play at 144 (67-77 for Carroll).

2A Girls: Victoria Greene, sophomore, Middleburg High, finishes 61st with score of 192 (103-89).

1A Girls: Camille Jackson, 8th grader, Keystone Heights High, finished tied for 41st with score of 165 (83-82).



Keystone Heights' seventh grader Camille Jackson has five more years to get state medal.



Clay High forward Lis Stoffel led Blue Devils to strong season, but Ponte Vedra and district foe Menendez proved too strong.

Soccer

1A Girls: St. Johns Country Day School wins 1A state title over Lakeland Christian 2-0.

2A Boys: Keystone Heights, 5-2A runner-ups to Crescent City, lost to The Villages in region quarterfinals. Villages loses to West Shore of Melbourne in region final. West Shore wins state title over Berkeley Prep of Tampa.

4A Boys: Fleming Island wins 4A title over Doral Academy of Miami 4-0.



Fleming Island midfielder Mark Suhrer started goal blast for Golden Eagles' 4-0 Class 4A win over Doral of Miami.



How Cheaper Gas May Cost You More Money

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Fleming Island's Tyler Mawhinney, right, held off a surge by Matthew French, center, to win the Orange Park Open. Left is Richard Ruth, third place finisher.



Orange Park golfer Alyzabeth Morgan points to the scoreboard to show off her 37 on the second round of the Orange Park Open.

Morgan, Mawhinney win Orange Park Open golf crowns

Ties for top round 37

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

FLEMING ISLAND — With second round 37 scores on the Golf Club of Fleming Island course, Orange Park junior golf titan Alyzabeth Morgan and Fleming Island wonderkid Tyler Mawhinney both won the Foundation players division of the Orange Park Open staged May 27-28 by the North Florida Junior Golf Foundation.

The Foundation Tour is a 9-hole competitive playing division consisting of players ages 7 – 12. Players on the Foundation Tour are mentored throughout the season to prepare them for the Rising or Elite Tours.

Morgan, 10, with two recent first place finishes; at the Lake City Open on May 7 and at the Titleist Invitational at St.

Johns Golf Club in St. Augustine on April 23, now has eight first place titles since January with a second place on April 15 at the University of Florida Invitational in Gainesville. Morgan leads the Foundation Girls spring series points race with 4,400 points off her eight wins with second place at 2,050 points.

At the Orange Park Open, Morgan shot the first round, a nine hole match, to a 45 score at nine stroke over par as she struggled with eight bogies and just one par.

In the second round, Morgan settled in and improved on the back nine at Fleming Island with three opening birdies to end with a 37 score. Morgan had just three bogies; one over par, and a birdie on the treacherous 17th hole before scoring par on the 18th to tie the best round of the day; boys or girls. Morgan finished with an 82 total score; 11 over par.

Grayson Kindig, 12, of St. Augustine,

finished second to Morgan at 113 for both rounds.

In the Foundation Boys matches, Fleming Island's Tyler Mawhinney, 9, edged out by one stroke, 79-80, to win his division with a 79 total score. Mawhinney also scored a tournament low 37 on the second round after a 42 in the first round.

Matthew French, 12, of Orange Park, was second to Mawhinney with his 80 off rounds of 41 and 39.

In round one, Mawhinney scored four pars with four bogies and one double bogie to finish at 42 with French holding a one stroke lead at 41 with four pars and five bogies.

In the second round, Mawhinney bogied his first two holes; 10 and 11, before hitting a birdie on 12 and parring 13. Mawhinney also birdied 15.

French birdied 10, but double bogied 11 to tie the score before a triple bogie on

13 proved disastrous. French fought back with three pars to Mawhinney's bogies on 14 and 16 and a birdie on 15 to set up a game-winning 17th and 18th hole finish.

On 17, Mawhinney parred with French going bogie while French birdied 18 to Mawhinney's par to finish one stroke behind Mawhinney. French, with seven tournament finishes, leads the Foundation points series with 3,712.50 points ahead of Richard Ruth of Jacksonville who has 3,525 points in nine events. French finished second at Lake City and won the Titleist Invitational. The Orange Park Open was Mawhinney's first match.

Next on the NFJG schedule are matches at Hyde Park June 7-8 (Dr. Gordon Ira Classic), St. Johns Golf and Country Club June 12 (North Florida PGA) and the Golf-Plex in Jax June 13-16 (TEEITUP Junior Camp #1). NFJG will host camps throughout the summer through July 28.

Zanders heads to Virginia

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

OAKLEAF — The University of Virginia football team recently added experience and injected competition into the quarterback position, when Missouri's Marvin Zanders announced that he will join the Cavaliers as a graduate transfer. Zanders played his junior high football at Oakleaf Junior High School. Zanders graduated out of Raines High in Jacksonville after playing his freshman and sophomore years at Oakleaf High School.

A redshirt sophomore, Zanders is scheduled to graduate from the Universi-

ty of Missouri in May and will be eligible in 2017. He bridges an experience gap at the position between Virginia returning starter Kurt Benkert, who will be a fifth-year senior, and three freshmen.

Virginia coach Bronco Mendenhall has made it known that he's not comfortable with that gap, saying last month that Virginia would pursue a grad transfer. Zanders visited over the weekend and announced his commitment Monday on Twitter.

The 6-foot-1, 185-pound Zanders appears to fulfill Mendenhall's desire to have a dual-threat QB. Last season, he threw 12 passes, completing 10 for 114 yards, but he rushed 35 times for 198 yards and two touchdowns.

"U.Va. has said they like my ability to extend plays with my legs and also make

plays from the pocket, and that I have the ability to make explosive plays in the run game," Zanders told the recruiting website 247Sports.

Zanders, a redshirt sophomore last season, appeared in eight games. He played nine snaps against West Virginia in the opener this season and was expected to play a significant role as a change-of-pace running threat during select series.

One of Zanders' highlights last season was a 13-play, 99-yard drive in the fourth quarter against Florida — completed 10 of 12 passes for 114 yards with a touchdown and no interceptions in his first extended action.

He also finished with 198 yards and two touchdowns on 35 carries.




Marvin Zanders

'The Murph'

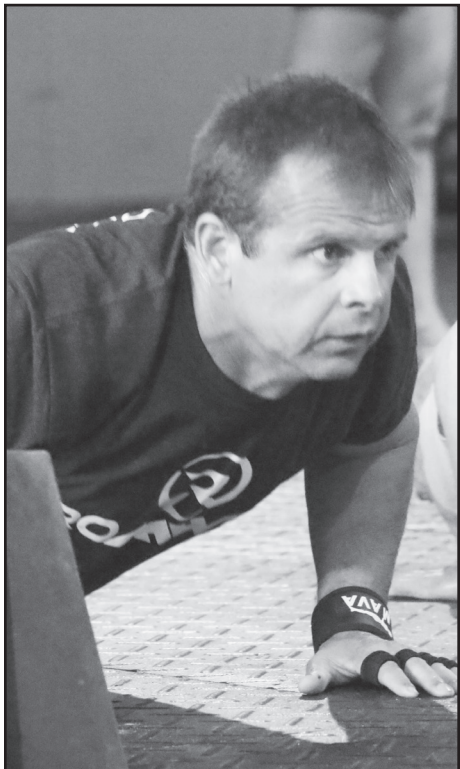


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"MURPH"




STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO
Black Fin Crossfit hosts annual Memorial Day fitness test.



Brutus
Meet Brutus ... We rescued him out of Clay County Animal Care And Control back in February of this year. Brutus is a 2 1/2 year old Hound Mix and he really is such a sweetheart and he loves to play. He loves to go on walks and walks GREAT on a leash. If you are out and about, why not stop by and visit him for yourself. His adoption fee is \$125 and that includes all his vaccinations, his neuter, his microchip and the first year of microchip service ... he is also heartworm negative!! Come meet Brutus and see for yourself at Safe Animal Shelter at 2913 County Road 220 in Middleburg at the corner of Knight Boxx Road. We are open Wednesday through Sunday from Noon to 5pm.



Alley Kat
Alley Kat ... We transferred her out of Clay County Animal Care And Control back in February of 2016. Alley is an almost 2 year old BEAUTIFUL domestic short hair gray tabby with streaks of cream running through her soft fur. She was adopted at the end of last year and brought back due to no fault of hers ... the new owners other cat didn't like her and she felt guilty so she brought Alley back. Ever since then Alley Kat has been sad and a bit aloof but we honestly believe that she will return back to her old loving and snuggling self once she is out of the shelter environment ... she just needs that person or family willing to take the chance for her!! Are you that person or family? Why not come on over to Safe and see her for yourself!! Her adoption fee is just \$85 and that includes ALL her vaccinations, her spay, her microchip and the first year of 24PetWatch microchip service.



Safe Animal Shelter
2913 County Road 220 Middleburg
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Wednesday-Sunday 12pm-5pm
www.safeanimalshelter.com

Memorial Day 5K gets 1300 to run

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – Nearly 1,300 runners braved hot, steamy weather to challenge the Florida Striders' annual Memorial Day 5K run Monday at the Orange Park 1st Place Sports running store.

Led by overall winner Kris Shold's 16 minute, eight second winning time, runners were braving the humid weather with stellar times for the extreme conditions.

For the women, Jacksonville stalwart Julie Stackhouse finished in the top 10 overall, seventh, with her winning 17:47 split over Olympic marathoner Kim Pawelek Brantley who was runner-up in 18:43.

Shold had to outspurt Jacksonville's Brian Shroud for his win with Shroud just eight seconds off the mark at 16:16. Sandalwood High standout Terrance Sessom finished third at 16:58.

Orange Park High track ace John Bear finished in 17:38 to place sixth overall with St. Johns Country Day School seventh grader Matthew Stratton finishing 14th with an 18:43 effort.

In age group action, Anaya Shrider edged Rebecca Stratton in the female 10-Unders with a winning 28:14 time. Grace Adams, 12, of Fleming Island, won female 11-13 in 21:33.

In male 10-Unders, Blake Gaucher of Orange Park won in 22:32 with Stratton winning the Male 11-13 group.

Next up is the June 3 Survivors Celebration Butterfly 5K in Orange Park with the annual Run for the Pies 5K set for June 10 at the Jacksonville Landing.



Runners take off at start of Florida Striders' Memorial Day 5K run on Monday.



Orange Park High trackster Stevenson Aris finished 21st in 19:03.



Orange Park's Patricia Keegan shows off her best Red, White and Blue run attire as she starts off the Memorial Day 5K in Orange Park.



Wheelchair athlete Tom Hall takes off from start.



Silly Striders; left to right, Grace Adams, Rebecca Stratton and Addison Adams stretch out their neck muscles for optimum performance. Grace Adams won 11-12 age group title in 21:33.



Clay High teacher Kim Hynes took 26:12 to cross the finish line with a smile.



Six year old Gabriella Sullivan takes off with more than 1,300 runners in annual Memorial Day 5K run held Monday in Orange Park.

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Broncos looking to better 2016

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

MIDDLEBURG – Middleburg High football coach Karl Smeltzer came into the May 26s matchup against the visiting Westside High Wolverines with a tall order to fill. Coming off last year's season with the first appearance in Bronco post-season play in 13 years, Smeltzer is looking to repeat and take it even further. While the performance at Friday night's game showed opportunities for improvement, he was pleased with his team scoring three touchdowns and successful point-after attempts. Final score Friday night: 28-21 with plenty to capitalize on.

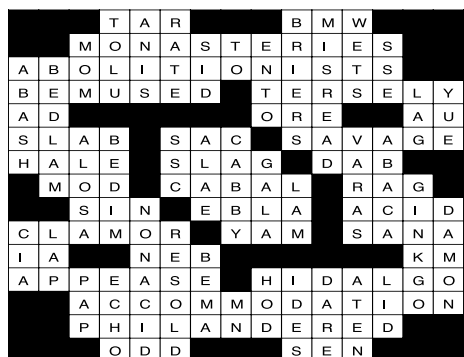
"I just want to see what we got, I want to be disciplined, that's really it," said Smeltzer. "We're not a real technical team. I want to fly around. I want to see who'll fly around and give me 110 percent. That's really what I'm looking for."

On the Westside opening drive, Middleburg showed their weakness out of the box as the Wolverines ran at will inside on the Broncos.

In the opening drive, the Wolverines attempted one pass which fell. They stuck to the run game and Coach Smeltzer found his number one priority to correct before the fall opener.

"That was a disappointing thing to me. I thought our defensive front was going to be better than what it was," said Smeltzer. "Now, we have three of them that have never played at this level. So I think they were a little timid at first and I will say this, you cannot simulate that speed in practice. He (Westside Quarterback Jalil Jackson) could put that foot in the ground and he could cut it back and we over-pursued, our angles were off and that was the

SEE BRONCOS, 37



SOLUTION:

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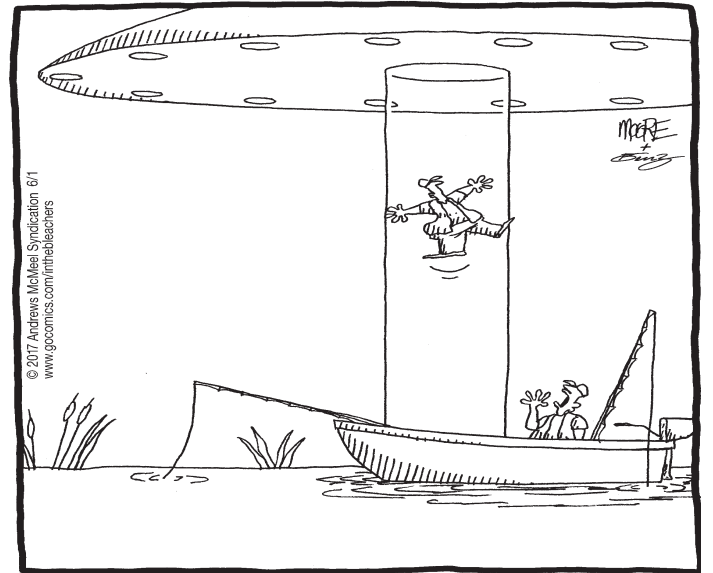
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Real Life Adventures



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6/1

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

2016-17

YEAR IN REVIEW **CLAY TODAY**



Weightlifting

1A Girls: Clay High's Ashleigh Dean and Erykah Murray win titles at 129 pounds.

1A Boys: Keystone Heights took third in team points. Taylor Beall finished third at 129. Keystone Heights got thirds from Justin Raysin at 183 and Brandon Staley at 139. Marcus Jones of Clay finished fifth at 219. Shawn Bizzell of Orange Park finished fourth in Unlimited with Alex Bailes sixth.

Clay High's Erykah Murray teamed with Blue Devil teammate Ashleigh Dean for two state titles.

2A Girls: Middleburg High's Neva Clinscale finishes third at 139.

2A Boys: Fleming Island High's Tyler Nguyen finishes second at 154 pounds. Middleburg's Tyler Braswell finished fourth at 119. Oakleaf's Jakobie Baker finished fourth at 183.

Wrestling

3A: Fleming Island High senior Jason Davis at 182 won the school's first state title. Fleming Island finished second in team points to South Dade High School. At 106, Briar Jackson finished third. At 152, Paul Detwiler finished third. At 195, Ryan Smenda finished fourth. At 220, Brandyne Mackey finishes sixth. At 285, Jose Concepcion finishes sixth.

2A: Orange Park High's Nartorian Lee at 170 finished second. Ridgeview High's Marcus Reid at 120 finished third. Middleburg High's unlimited Bailey Barnard finished fourth. At 182, Bryan Heflin, Middleburg, finished sixth.

1A: Clay High's Chris Merring at 120 finishes second. Keath Sawdo at 145 finishes second. Kurt Jackson at 220 finishes third. Kaleb Collins at 195 finishes third. Peyton Hughes at 126 finishes third. Lou Gagliardo at 106 finishes third. Clay finishes second in team points.

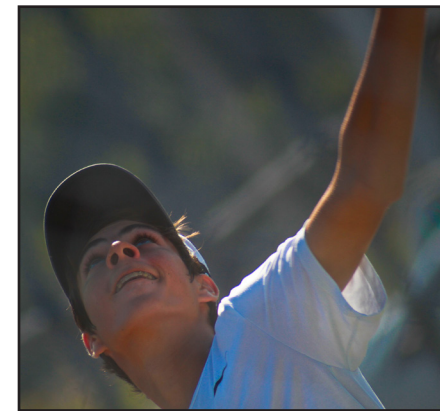


Fleming Island High senior Jason Davis answered two third place finishes with first gold for Eagles.

Tennis

4A Boys: Fleming Island boys win region with wins over Seminole and Lake Mary, lose to Wiregrass Ranch in round one of state tournament. Wiregrass Ranch lost to Douglas High in final.

Fleming Island High freshman Logan Zapp was newcomer in state ranks that pushed Golden Eagles to first team state meet visit.



Twice gold medalists; left to right, Jack Neeley, Andrew Heinton, John Hutton, Nick Hackett and team coach Jordan Bright had a target on their back and still defended their title in 4 x 50 free relay.

Swimming

3A: Fleming Island Boys 4 x 50 free relay wins gold medal for second consecutive year. Nick Hackett, Jack Neeley, Andrew Heinton, John Hutton (senior). Hackett wins 100 butterfly, 200 freestyle.

3A Girls: Oakleaf High senior Elianna Kennon wins 50 freestyle.

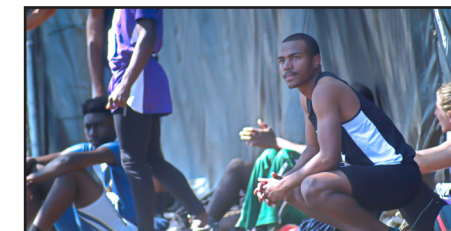


Oakleaf High senior Elianna Kennon got her gold in final state meet; 50 free.

Track and Field

4A: Oakleaf High triple jumper Melvin Biley, pictured right, won state title with 49 foot, seven inch jump. Oakleaf High high jumper Anthony Norris finished sixth and also third in the long jump. Oakleaf High long jumper Loren Johnson finished fifth with teammate Jaqueline Thomas sixth. Fleming Island's Andrew Miller finished fourth in the 3200. Evan Fuller, also at Fleming Island, took 10th in the 3200.

3A: Middleburg High triple jumper Marcus Floyd finished second at 45 feet, 11.75 inches. Floyd also finished eighth in the 100. Middleburg High high jumper Kaley Petrosky finished fourth with teammate Bryce Quiett sixth also in the high jump.



2A: Ridgeview triple jumper Devon Fertil finished eighth at 45 feet, 1.75 inches.

1A: St. Johns Country Day School 300 meter hurdler Courtney Sage, a freshman, finished third in 45.73. In the 3200, seventh grader Mackenzie Glenn finished 12th.

Volleyball

7A Middleburg: District 3-7A runnerup, Lost in region quarterfinals to Ocala Vanguard. Vanguard loses to South Fork in state championship.

6A Ridgeview: District 4-6A champions, Lost in region semifinals to Bishop Kenny. Kenny beat Arnold High in region final, lost to Ponte Vedra in state semifinal. Ponte Vedra lost in state final to Bishop Moore.

5A Keystone Heights: District 4-5A champions, lost in region quarterfinal to Episcopal. Episcopal lost to Bolles in region semifinals. Bolles lost to Lake Highland Prep in state semifinals. Lake Highland Prep lost to Westminster Christian in state final.

3A St. Johns Country Day School: District 2-3A runnerup to St. Francis, lost to John Paul II in region semifinal. John Paul II lost to St. Francis in region final. St. Francis beat Seacrest Country Day for state title.

Ridgeview High repeated as district volleyball champs with second region berth.





CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Middleburg linebacker Kaleb Strength zeroes in on Westside ball carrier.

Broncos

from page 35

disappointing thing. I thought we'd be better there."

The Middleburg defensive backfield will also need work as they were beat deep several times. Middleburg showed speed tracking down passes that went for long yards, but they'll need to work on not letting receivers get behind them.

On offense, Smeltzer got the discipline he was looking for. During warm-ups, his line continually jumped early. Once the game began, not one false start. The Broncos took advantage of Westside's discipline issue. At least 10 times, the Broncos went on the second go, and earned a free five yards from Wolverine offside call. The game was very physical and several personal fouls were called for post play altercations.

On his offense, Smeltzer said "A lot of positive things, especially offensively. We started five new offensive linemen. Our running game with our fullback and our tailbacks are really good. We have to get a little better at receiver, but our offensive line were really good."

Middleburg showed real good speed in Andrew Thomas as he broke out several times and gained great yardage as he avoided tacklers. Middleburg's Kodi Carrington proved to be the short yardage specialist as well as a great lead blocker. Quarterback Garrett Blanchett showed good footwork scrambling around when he needed. Middleburg suffered a few dropped exchanges to running backs that will need to get worked on. Blanchett showed a great arm in warmups, and will need to develop that in game situations as his passes fell short and the Broncos were never much of a pass threat. That was, until late in the game when they brought in Joe Justino in the second half. Out of the box, he went deep and found Brandon Gary several times.

Smeltzer wrapped up his team's performance as well as his thoughts of what he can get done over the summer. "I think over the summer you can get a lot of experience by playing 7 on 7. That's where my DB's are going to work. This will go a long way watching the film Tuesday and let the kids see what we have to (work on) and what we need to do."



Middleburg High defensive back Trey Barker puts the boom on Westside ball carrier in the Broncos' spring game at Middleburg High School.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 8 PM

JFK: The Lost Inaugural Gala

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Fleming Island, FL 32003
904-579-2154

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CLAY TODAY LEADER

CLAY COUNTY THE LEADER IN LOCAL NEWS

Mail this form with payment to:
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Fleming Island, FL. 32003

Or drop it by the office.
We are open 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Monday -Friday
Call: 269-2999
Fax: 269-6958

Classified ads

Classified ads are 4 lines of text (20-25 characters per line)
Payment must be made before ad will be published.
We accept Cash, Check, Major Credit & Debit Cards.

Type of Ad

- Private Party (TVs, Sofas, Household, etc.)**
 - 1 Week \$14.50 2 Weeks \$24.50
 - 3 Weeks \$32.50 4 Weeks \$39.00
- Commercial (Rentals, Cars, Advertise your business.)**
 - 1 Week - \$23 2 Weeks - \$40
 - 3 Weeks - \$57 4 Weeks - \$72
- Garage Sales**
\$21 - 4 lines of text (20-25 characters per line)

Ad Copy One Letter, Number, Punctuation Mark or Space Per Box

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ADDITIONAL LINES are \$2.15 each.

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Credit Card _____ Exp. _____

CLAY TODAY LEADER

CLAY COUNTY THE LEADER IN LOCAL NEWS






Thinking of Advertising in the Clay Today?

For more information call (904) 579-2154 to speak with a Sales Rep. today!

WE'RE ALL EARS

Questions? Comments? Story Ideas? Let us know how we're doing.

CLAY TODAY
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THREE FULL-TIME POSITIONS AVAILABLE:

- JOURNEYMAN PLUMBER
Experienced in commercial and industrial work.
- Carpenter's HELPER
- Plumber's HELPER

Qualified applicants must have good driving record and pass background check. DFWP Call 904-388-4799

Renovation
(Labor, Handy man skills)

Position available with Penney Retirement Community
Excellent benefits

Send Resumes to:
dsevilla@penneyretirementcommunity.org
Fax at: 904-284-8207

NOW HIRING

Director of Nursing,
RN, CNA, Full time & Part time

Maintenance Tech
(Roofing Exp. Handy man skills, valid Driver's license)

Positions available with Penney Retirement Community
Excellent benefits

Send Resumes to:
dsevilla@penneyretirementcommunity.org
Fax at: 904-284-8207

City of Keystone Heights

Maintenance Worker 1
The City of Keystone Heights is searching for a Maintenance Worker 1. Job duties include but not limited to routine maintenance of parks, streets, cemetery, and city hall. Will be required to obtain inmate supervisor certification and a Class "B" CDL. This position will report directly to Public Works Supervisor. Candidate must demonstrate any combination of education and experience that will produce the required knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform the essential functions of the position. This is a part-time position. Position will remain open until filled.

Administrative Assistant
The City of Keystone Heights is searching for an Administrative Assistant. Job duties include but not limited to answering and directing phone calls, creating and maintaining Excel spreadsheets and Word documents, sending and responding to emails and maintaining calendars via Outlook as well as maintaining a friendly attitude while assisting the public. This position will report directly to the City Manager and his designee. Candidate must demonstrate any combination of education and experience that will produce the required knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform the essential functions of the position. This is a part-time position. Position will remain open until filled.

Applications are available on the city website or at City Hall, 555 S. Lawrence Blvd, Keystone Heights, FL 32656. Contact Lynn Rutkowski, City Clerk, at 352-473-4807. EOE. Drug free/ smoke free work place.

VyStar® Credit Union Job Fair

VyStar Credit Union will be hosting a Job Fair on two separate occasions to fill the following positions:

Call Center Supervisors, Member Service Specialists (Call Center Reps), Member Relationship Specialists, Universal Member Relationship Specialists, Lead Tellers, Teller Specialists, and Business Lenders

Please come dressed to impress with an updated resume in hand; as the hiring managers will be conducting interviews on-site.

VyStar offers competitive pay and great benefits for permanent employees! Benefits include: Medical, Dental, Vision, Life and Disability Insurance, 401(k), Holiday Pay, Paid Time Off, and Tuition Reimbursement.

Location/Times:

| | |
|---|---|
| Thursday, June 15, 2017 5:30-8:00pm Cascone Building: 4949 Blanding Boulevard Jacksonville, FL 32210 | Saturday, June 24, 2017 8:00am-12:00pm VyStar Story Center (Call Center): 2310 Village Square Parkway Fleming Island, FL 32003 |
|---|---|

To pre-register, please apply online at www.vystarcu.org/home/careers and select Job Fair on the "How Did You Hear About Us" drop down. We look forward to meeting with you!!!

VyStar Credit Union is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Place your employment ad here for as little as \$52 a week. All ads appear online.
Call Martha 579-2154

Northeast Florida's #1 choice for **EMERGENCY** care is in Clay County.

In an emergency, minutes count. That's why we brought our 24/7 Emergency Center close to you – providing convenient access with shorter wait times. Our full-service ER on the Baptist Clay Medical Campus in Fleming Island serves the whole family and features a 100% dedicated children's ER, backed by the resources of Wolfson Children's Hospital. Learn more at baptistclay.com.



Emergency Center

at Baptist Clay Medical Campus

1771 Baptist Clay Drive, Fleming Island, Florida 32003

baptistclay.com

 **904.516.1000**

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- Children's rehabilitation

