

# CLAY TODAY



The results are in! – Insert

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019

WWW.CLAYTODAYONLINE.COM

VOLUME 53, NO. 23 75¢

## Future VA Clinic to be named after fallen Middleburg sailor

By Don Coble  
Managing Editor

MIDDLEBURG – The new Veteran’s Administration clinic that will open next year will be named after a Chief Andrew K. Baker, a Navy combat search and rescue swimmer who died during a training mission on March 13, 1997.

Rep. Ted Yoho (R-Fla.) said Baker was selected among five candidates by a public vote. The Congressman said, in part:

“I am extremely grateful to all of the community members who nominated individuals and shared these important stories of dedication, service, and sacrifice. I would also like to share my appreciation for VISN 8 – our regional VA hospital system. They have been tremendous partners



Andrew K. Baker

SEE SAILOR, 13



## HURRICANE 2019

### Hurricane preparation should start long before the first gust of wind

By Don Coble  
Managing Editor

CLAY COUNTY – It’s hurricane season. Are you ready?

The time to prepare for a storm is long before tropical waves are formed in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. That means working well ahead of the wind, rain and flooding that comes with each storm.

The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service, Florida Division of Emergency Management and Clay County Emergency Management all agree: If you don’t have a plan, make one. If you don’t have

#### 2019 HURRICANE NAMES

Andrea	Humberto	Olga
Barry	Imelda	Pablo
Chantal	Jerry	Rebekah
Dorian	Karen	Sebastian
Erin	Lorenzo	Tanya
Fernand	Melissa	Van
Gabrielle	Nestor	Wendy

supplies, get them. If you wait until landfall is imminent, it’s already too late.

Preparation can be the difference in survival or death.

“One of the most important things we can do as Floridians is not forget that storm season comes every year and we need to always assume it will be a serious hurricane season,” said Lisa Miller, former Florida Insurance Commissioner. “It’s all about protecting people and prop-

SEE HURRICANE, 16

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Every week we will feature an individual or group that works to improve our community.

By Wesley LeBlanc  
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – One Ridgeview High sophomore works daily for her very own nonprofit to ensure families in Clay County unable to pay for food have something to eat on their dinner table.

When Kenyatta Hogan, 16, was young-

‘Nobody should go to sleep hungry’

## Hogan’s company feeds the needs of the community

er, her mother was diagnosed with cancer. While she had a job, the chemotherapy made it difficult to work. Periodically unable to pay for food, the family searched for help around Clay County but found themselves often turned away.

“They would turn us away and turn us down because my mom still had a job,” Hogan said. “And, it’s like, yes, she does have a job, but she can’t always work because of

SEE HOGAN, 20

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# Clay County Memories



By Mary Jo McTammany tamctammany@comcast.net

## Early Clay settlers greeted by massive stands of 6,000-year-old bald cypresses

In the mid-1800s, massive stands of old growth bald cypress trees, also known as Florida's Giant – were common along Black Creek and her dense network of area creeks and swamps. These early Goliaths were more than 6,000 years old.

They stretched over 100 feet into the air with diameters of twenty feet and more. Most of the branches clustered at the top resembling a toupee perched on a hairless head. "Bald" would seem to be an appropriate distinction.

A bulging, bell-bottom shape at the base and an extensive root system provided support. Knobby "knees" extending upward from the roots also allowed the absorption of oxygen.

Early harvesting of all types of timber depended on ready access to creeks or the river to float the trees out of the deep woods and on to large mills in Green Cove Springs and Palatka.

Cutting cypress in the days before heavy machinery was different from dropping other primary growth trees. The sheer

size and weight of these giants required not only muscle and skill but also planning and patience coupled with specific knowledge.

Several months before the tree was put on the ground, an ax was used to chop a groove through the outer cambium layer all around the tree. Finding a place to stand on the steeply sloping base and still swing an ax without falling into water to become moccasin bait was a challenge.

This maneuver was critical because it interrupted the upward intake of water through the outer cambium layer and caused the tree to slowly dry reducing its weight and increasing buoyancy sufficiently to allow it to float. If not executed correctly the logs promptly sank and could sink an entire raft of logs to the bottom. The bottom of Black Creek is still peppered with "sinker".

Once the tree was on the ground it was cut into maneuverable lengths of 16 to 32 feet.

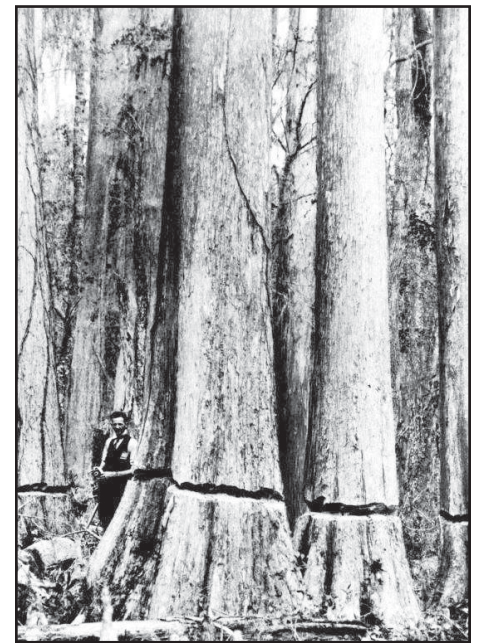
Harvesting of these majestic trees continued unabated for decades and by the

early 1900s the accessible supply was dwindling. In the 1920s boon, designers and architects discovered "pesky cypress" previously considered only fit for fencing, stakes or spacers to dry lumber.

This wood came from young trees barely a hundred years old and not yet secreting sufficient insect resistant oils. Suddenly trees considered unfit for sale became a rare and sought commodity and loggers were back in the woods hunting cypress.

In the depression of the thirties when times were really hard, men took up fishing for cypress sinkers in Black Creek. With the supply nearly exhausted but demand inflated the grueling work of recovering the logs was cost effective.

The truly ancient giants in Clay County are gone. Their younger and smaller descendants stand - reminders of the very distant past and the days when a single species of tree could provide a way for hungry families to survive.



These bald cypress trees along the south prong of Black Creek in the late 1800s have been prepared for drying prior to cutting and being transported to mills in Palatka and Green Cove Springs.

## Keystone Heights to negotiate raise for City Manager Kornegay

By Nick Blank  
Staff Writer

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – City council members voted 4-1 to open negotiations with City Manager Scott Kornegay for a raise.

In April, Kornegay's performance was evaluated. Out of a possible five, council members scored Kornegay between 4.44 and 4.64 in 10 categories, such as "citizen relations," "fiscal management" and "community."

"The results of the evaluation pretty much speak for itself," Council Member Stephen Hart said. "You have a couple outliers but generally speaking, the results are quite favorable."

There were five questions a category. Lake gave lower scores than the other four council members, including former council member Steve Brown, who departed in April. Lake voted against starting negotiations.

The day after meeting, Lake addressed her vote via a written statement. Lake said she was willing to keep an open mind and poll a group of residents to understand res-



STAFF PHOTO BY NICK BLANK

City clerk Lynn Ruthowski, left, and administrative assistant Mary Miller, right, were recognized by city council member Larry Peoples for their work during "Our Country Day" celebration.

idents want from the position. She added that Keystone does not provide some of

the services that comparable municipalities have, such as electric or wastewater,

which contributed to her "no" vote.

"As a city, I don't believe we have ever paid anyone this amount of money before. As a budgetary officer, I'm concerned about dedicating 10% of our annual budget to one position and the impact it will have on future hires," Lake wrote. "While people think of Keystone Heights as being 'bigger,' in actuality, we're one-square mile. I try to serve 'at-large' in Keystone Heights as a mayor, socially, but financially in the City of Keystone Heights, we're one square mile."

Hart motioned to enter negotiations with Kornegay with a 2 percent base salary increase derived from the Consumer Price Index and a merit raise. Kornegay's current base salary is \$71,500.

Later in the meeting, Kornegay announced the city's partnership with the Clay County Sheriff's Office's "Clay Community Connect" surveillance program to monitor four cameras on Sunrise Boulevard.

Deputies presented information about

**SEE KEYSTONE, 14**

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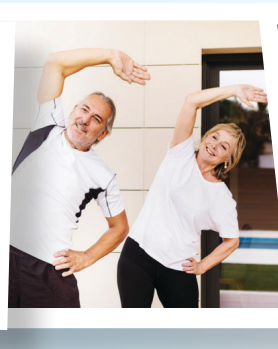
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## Supporters plan federal suit to overturn dog racing ban

**bestbet Orange Park has 'no comment' on possible litigation**

By Jim Rosica  
FloridaPolitics.com

The head of a pro-greyhound racing group now says supporters will file suit in federal court next month to “overturn” the constitutional amendment effectively banning dog racing in Florida.

Jennifer Newcome, who was chair of the Committee to Support Greyhounds, announced the move last Thursday in a public post on Facebook. It was on behalf of the offshoot “Support Working Animals” organization, online as Overturn13.org.

“With the abundance of information for [the legal team] to go through in order to prepare both the outline and body of the case, we are looking at filing in July,” she wrote. Plans for the lawsuit were first announced on YouTube.

Amendment 13, passed with 69 percent ‘yes’ votes in November, outlaws placing bets on greyhound and other dog races, such as at the state’s pari-mutuels, effective the beginning of 2021.

Many tracks already have stopped racing in the meantime; the measure allows other gambling at tracks, such as card games, to continue even after dog racing ends.

The amendment was placed on the ballot by the 2017-18 Constitution Revision Commission, as opposed to a citizen initiative or by the Legislature.

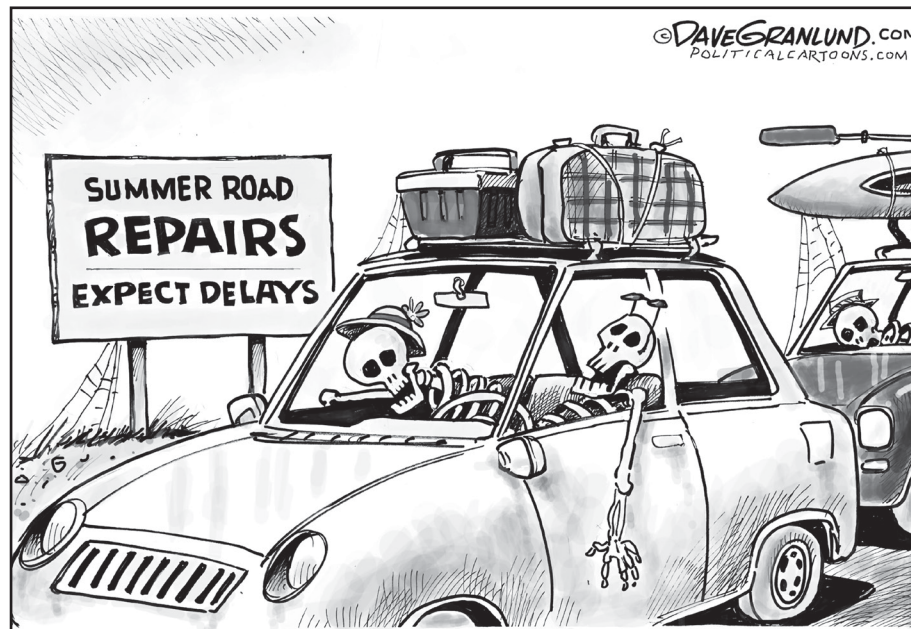
It was championed by then-Attorney General Pam Bondi, who also sat on the commission and regularly brought shelter dogs to state Cabinet meetings to get them adopted.

According to the Overturn13 website, the “greyhound industry in Florida, a legal trade and industry, was arbitrarily eliminated in Florida without proper ‘due process.’” Support Working Animals says it represents “trainers, adopters, kennel owners, workers, race dog owners and fanciers.”

“Some have said the CRC was the ‘due process,’” it continues. “But as we claim, and the evidence clearly shows, the outcome of Amendment 13 was predetermined by the illegal political process within the CRC.”

Requests for comment were sent to former commissioners and to representatives for the Florida Greyhound Association, which represents breeders and owners. bestbet Orange Park president Jamie Shelton was aware of the possible lawsuit but declined to comment. His track has a year-

**SEE DOG RACE, 5**



## At 104, Ned Broyles still defines America's Greatest Generation

by Don Coble  
Managing Editor

FLEMING ISLAND – Ned Broyles was busy flying training missions with his Navy F4U Corsair squadron in Rockland, Maine, on June 5, 1944, for a possible top-secret mission. Little did he know, his squadron was preparing for a backup plan to assist the invasion of five beaches at Normandy, France.

Although he didn't have to join that fight, the retired Navy Captain still has vivid memories of the battle that finally gave the Allies the upper hand in its war against Germany.

“I remember it well,” he said. “I didn't know the mission at the time. Thank goodness we weren't needed.”

Now 104 and living at Allegro Senior Living, Broyles still defines America's Greatest Generation. He fought in World War II and Korea, and he was part of the search party in 1939 for Amelia Earhart. He's lived through 14 presidencies, watched the Cold War come and go and endured an ever-changing political landscape that continues teeters back and forth like an out of control pendulum.

But one thing has never changed.

“If I was needed, I would have been there to support it,” he said.

Although Broyles wasn't needed for

the D-Day invasion in Europe, he didn't escape the bloody realities of war. Once the invasion at Normandy proved successful – at the cost of 2,501 American lives – Broyles was reassigned to the U.S. Marines amphibious group and shipped to the Pacific theater to fight Japan. He hit the beaches at Iwo Jima and Okinawa in battles where more than 82,000 Americans were killed.

“In 1944 I was transferred to the Marine Corps,” Broyles said. “I had no idea the seriousness of the operation we were headed into. We arrived off Iwo the day before [Pacific] D-Day on 18 February. I was carrying a rifle, sidearm, ammo, two canteens of water. We had to be self-sufficient. The mission was to guide aircraft for bombing.”

The battle at Iwo Jima lasted 24 days. It was an important early step in stopping Japan's march across the Pacific.

“I remember there were 30-percent casualties,” Broyles said. “It was a fierce battle.”

He also remembered the Navy's beachmaster, soldier-turned-actor Lee Marvin, being wounded.

From there to Okinawa, the bloodiest battles of the war.

**SEE BROYLES, 5**



### Send us a letter ...

We'd like to hear from you. Perhaps you are concerned about the county commission, the school board or your city council or commission, sit down and take a few moments to write us a letter.

All we ask is that you keep it civil, no name-calling and write

no more than 600 words. All we ask is that you stick to local issues, be clear and make a point. We reserve the right to edit for AP Stylebook errors, grammar and spelling. In your email, type Letter to the Editor in your subject and send it to Managing Editor Don Coble at don@opcl.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

### Opinions

The views and opinions expressed on this page are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Clay Today.



Word of the Week is a 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.

**Attainder:** A noun that means “the loss of all civil rights as a legal consequence to the death sentence or treason.”

“Earl Thomas was executed for treason, and though his attainder was reversed, it was too late to keep his brother Henry from succeeding the throne.”

## This week in history

### Five years ago, 2014

- Orange Park's first Kids Fest attracts more than 10,000 people at Town Hall.
- County Commissioners agree to outlaw erecting campaign signs in the ground at polling sites on election days.
- Children Over Politics Committee abandons its petition drive to have the county's school superintendent appointed, not elected.

### 10 years ago, 2009

- Girl Scouts of Gateway Council break ground on a new camp called North Fork near Middleburg.
- Fleming Island's Shannon Davis became the first person to perform the Ghillie Callum dance within the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes.
- Evelyn Chastain moves as principal at Clay Hill Elementary to Charles E. Bennett in Green Cove Springs.

### 20 years ago, 1999

- BBC's “Mysteries” comes to Clay County to film a segment that retells the 1982 story of 18-month-old Dewey McCall Jr. wasn't injured despite being ran over by a bulldozer.
- Project Graduation is created at four local high schools to give graduates a safe, alcohol- and drug-free, place to celebrate.
- A second student at Keystone Heights High is found with bomb-making instructions.

### 30 years ago, 1989

- Clay County drug bust leads to seven arrests for trafficking cocaine.

**SEE HISTORY, 5**

# Broyles

from page 4

"It was the bloodiest battles of World War II. There were 1,900 kamikaze attacks," Broyles said. "They sank 32 of our ships and damaged another 350."

Counting Okinawans and Japanese, more than 200,000 died during a battle that lasted two months and three weeks.

It also was the last of the major battles of the war. Four months after the battle of Okinawa ended on April 1, 1945, the U.S. dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese mainland at Hiroshima and Nagasaki to force Japan to surrender.

Germany surrendered three weeks later.

We enjoy liberty and freedom today because of the men who bravely stormed the beaches of France and the Pacific Islands. We continue to stand against tyranny because that's what the Greatest Generation, including soldiers like Ned Broyles, taught us.



Ken Broyles is 104 and still has vivid memories of the important, yet costly, battles that shaped the end of World War II. He trained to backup the invasion of Normandy, and then he was shipped to the Pacific where he hit the beaches of Iwa Jima and Okinawa.

# History

from page 4

- Summer enrollment at St. Johns River Community College's Orange Park Center increases by 71 percent compared to the previous summer.

- Florida Highway Patrol's "Operation Speedwatch" leads to more than 5,000 tickets in six Northeast Florida counties, including Clay.

## 40 years ago, 1979

- The Florida Legislature passes a bill which allows Clay County to negotiate a franchise fee with Jacksonville Electric Authority for meters, lines and poles in unincorporated areas.

- County Commissioners authorize a letter to the legislative delegation to see if Clay County is being fairly treated in the fuel allocation it receives.

- Charles and Betty Todd take over Liberty IGA grocery store on Walnut Street from Doc and Agnes Turner.

# Dog race

from page 4

long schedule with eight racing programs weekly.

Jack Cory, the FGA's lobbyist and spokesman, previously said that "overturning a voter-approved constitutional amendment is not a viable option in Florida."

Christine Dorchak, president and general counsel, of Grey2K USA Worldwide, one of the anti-racing groups that fought for Amendment 13's passage, called its approval the result of a "compassionate vote."

Now, "months after the vote, a small number of greyhound breeders are now trying to undo the will of the people," she said in a statement. "Their misguided lawsuit is a slap in the face of every voter and has zero chance of success. This is just sour grapes from a losing campaign."

The Overturn13 website, however, says "Greyhound Nation did not back down before, and we refuse to stop until the last judge says 'no.'"

"We are an all-volunteer group made up of adopters and greyhound racing enthusiasts working towards a legal solution to allow racing to continue in Florida. We want to protect the history of greyhound racing and also thereby preserve the unique American racing greyhound.

"Our supporters include adopters, some racing owners, some kennel owners, trainers, assistants and enthusiasts, as well as people who don't even own any greyhounds, but own and work with other breeds and other working animals. We are standing up for the hundreds of hard-working people who love these dogs and will lose their livelihoods and everything they love as a result of this Unconstitutional Amendment.

"We have found that many other animal

entities have been slandered and victimized of the same misleading types of propaganda from the same entities who campaigned for passage of Amendment 13 and have since moved on.

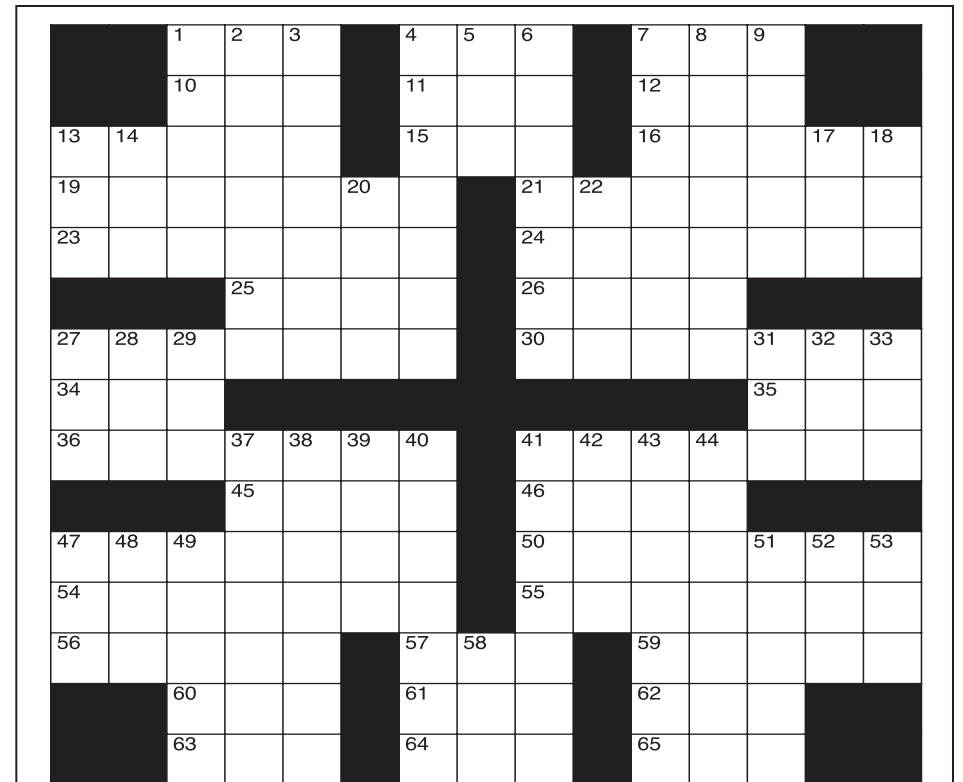
"Our primary focus right now is the legal suit. We have retained a legal team who are preparing to rectify a situation that should not have happened in the first place. What drives us is a thought. We don't want to wake up on January 1, 2021 and wonder what if we kept fighting for the greyhounds. Some may say we're out of touch, or that the people have spoken, or that we're grasping at straws.

"Well, we're not letting go of those straws until they take us where we need to go in order to keep greyhounds racing in Florida."

*Jim Rosica is the Tallahassee-based Senior Editor for Florida Politics. He previously was the Tampa Tribune's state-house reporter. Before that, he covered three legislative sessions in Florida for The Associated Press. Jim graduated from law school in 2009 after spending nearly a decade covering courts for the Tallahassee Democrat, including reporting on the 2000 presidential recount. He can be reached at jim@floridapolitics.com.*



Ken Broyles is 104 and still has vivid memories of the important, yet costly, battles that shaped the end of World War II. He trained to backup the invasion of Normandy, and then he was shipped to the Pacific where he hit the beaches of Iwa Jima and Okinawa.



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Mathematical term (abbr.)
4. Seaport (abbr.)
7. "Unforgettable" singer
10. The GOAT
11. Used to harvest agave cactus
12. Luke's mentor \_\_\_-Wan
13. Muses
15. IBM operating system
16. Hungarian village
19. Popular conversation topic
21. N. Atlantic island
23. Fail to discern correctly
24. The President has one
25. Irish Gaelic language
26. Gasteyer and Ivanovic are two
27. Garnished
30. National capital
34. Basics
35. Initial public offering
36. Winged horse
41. English synthpop duo
45. Mars crater
46. A lot
47. Small organelles
50. By reason of
54. "Growing Pains" actor Kirk

### CLUES DOWN

1. Belongs to the daughter of Chaos
2. Wardrobe
3. Derek and Jeff are two
4. Disfigured
5. Hawaiian dish
6. What a hack drives
7. Horse gear
8. Do away with
9. Narrow straits between Sinai and Arabian peninsulas
13. Corrie
14. Hawaiian flower necklace
17. Midway between northeast and east
18. Insecticide
20. Comfort
22. Town in Galilee
27. Informal greeting
28. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
29. Used to check the heart
31. Western India island
32. Credit card term
33. Female deer
37. British football team
38. Persian jurisdiction
39. Freshwater mussel genus
40. Opposite of happiness
41. Ban on trade
42. Bitterly regrets
43. Assented
44. Well-proportioned
47. Part of (abbr.)
48. Indigenous people of Thailand
49. A man of your stature (abbr.)
51. Advantageous
52. Female sibling
53. Electronic countermeasures
58. Swiss river

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# Trauma survivors return to OPMC to celebrate recovery, promote hope

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – Each year more than 214,000 people lose their lives to trauma related injuries, coming in at the second leading cause of death in ages 46 and younger. That’s one person every three minutes.

Orange Park Medical Center recently hosted an event to celebrate those that have beat the odds and survived traumatic injuries.

Trauma patients returned to the hospital to celebrate each other and those that helped them survive and recover from their traumatic injuries. The hospital’s annual event includes survivor speakers, the dedication of a new rose bush and bench by Customs and Border Control Agent and trauma survivor Drew Stokes, the opportunity for staff, survivors and their families to paint personal messages on rocks that will be placed around the new bush and bench and music played by trauma survivor Isaias Chalvisant.

Survivors included: John Taylor, a firefighter with Clay County Fire and Rescue, who was struck by a vehicle driven by other first responders at a bar; Gilberto Lopez, a motorcyclists who had his leg amputated after he was hit by a truck; Evelyn Silva, a 24-year-old woman who suffered a traumatic brain injury from a car crash; U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent Drew Stokes, who was gunned down at an Orange Park grocery store; and Chalvisant, who suffered a head injury during a crash.

Stokes also helped dedicate a rose bush and bench to honor all trauma victims. The area was decorated by “dedication stones” created by the survivors with memories and encouragements for future patients.

Orange Park Medical Center has treated more 5,000 patients with traumatic injuries, which would not have been possible without local fire and rescue teams.



Isaias Chalvisant survived a horrific accident between a car and a tractor-trailer to return to OPMC to thank the staff and doctors.



Survivors were encouraged to write messages on “dedication stones” to be placed around a bench and bush planted to remember all of the victims of trauma injuries.



Karina Silva, right, attended a recent reunion at the hospital to celebrate life – and the amazing recoveries from patients who suffered severe trauma injuries. Silva suffered a traumatic brain injury in a car accident.

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# Ken Brock UPDATE 2,650 Miles

Keystone Heights to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

## Brock celebrates birthday by getting 300 miles closer to Coeur d'Alene

By Don Coble  
Managing Editor

BILLINGS, Mont. — Ken Brock turned 54 on Wednesday. There was no birthday cake, card, balloons or a free breakfast at Denny's.

The U.S. Army veteran from Keystone Heights celebrated with his feet wrapped in ice bags and a room at the best hotel room a town of 109,642 could offer.

It was a birthday Brock won't ever forget. Or regret.

"I had a great week," Brock said after putting more than 300 miles behind him in the past week on his quest to walk from Amvets Post 86 in Keystone Heights to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in time for the town's Fourth of July parade to raise awareness for the post-traumatic stress disorder programs at Wounded Warrior Program.

Despite being hampered by two weeks of deadly tornadoes in Alabama, flooding in Missouri and Nebraska, snow in South Dakota and a two-week detour caused by the Veteran's Administration, Brock is starting to believe he may complete his 2,650-mile mission on time.

"I'm starting to see the light," Brock said. "It's there. I've been able to free-walk for the past week and I've been busting my butt. There were days last week I put in 35 miles a day. Now there's a slim possibility. A couple weeks ago it wasn't doable. A week ago, it started to seem

almost possible. Now it's starting to get a little closer."

With 2,150 miles down since starting his walk on Feb. 1, Brock now is about 500 miles from the finish line.

Brock said he doesn't feel pressure to complete the walk. He realized months ago he had to finish the route. The real pressure, he said, is getting to Coeur d'Alene on time.

Even if Mother Nature and Uncle Sam keep creating roadblocks.

Brock was ordered to return from South Dakota to Florida last month for a routine interview and to update his paperwork with the VA. It was a distraction that almost put an end to his journey.

Before he left Florida to resume his walk in South Dakota, he was invited to WWP headquarters, where he was showered with gifts and praise by employees who monitor his progress every day.



His brother, Terry Brock, decided to join him. He followed Ken in a van, carrying Brock's 100-pound utility cart and service dog Pam. That allowed Brock to make up a lot of lost time and miles.

Terry Brock is supposed to return to Florida this weekend. After that, Ken Brock will be on his own.

There is a ridge of foothills ahead before he gets to his next "big" city in Montana, Helena. After that, he faces the Rocky Mountains. The key, he said, is get-


ting another 100 miles behind him before his brother leaves.

"The good thing is if I go up [the mountains], at some point, I get to come down," he said. "My feet hurt; I'm tired. I'm running on adrenaline. But I'm getting closer. If I don't run into any more obstacles, I'm starting to believe I'll make it on time."

If so, count on a birthday cake, card, balloons and all the free dinners an Army veteran can handle to be waiting.

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# Obituaries

## Ira G. Kitts

Ira G. Kitts, 91, passed away May 27, 2019. He was born June 20, 1927 in Bluefield, Virginia and resided in Middleburg, Florida for the past thirty-five years.

He was the widower of Ruth Kitts. They shared more than thirty-four years of marriage together. Ira attended school in Bluefield VA. He served in the Navy during World War II. Ira was employed as a truck driver for thirty-two years. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge attaining the level of 32ND degree and was a member of the Shriners. His hobbies were making home improvements, gardening and playing board games. He was a devout Christian, studying the bible daily. He served as a devotional leader and Sunday School teacher in the church. Ira loved everybody, never complained and was always smiling.



Ira G. Kitts

Ira is survived by his loving family, brother; Herbert Kitts, sister; Claudette Kitts, daughter; Connie Diane Brown/ Ray Brown, son; Charles David Kitts/Mary Kitts, eight grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren, and six great great grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on June 8 at Canterfield of Clay County, 1611 Winners Circle, Middleburg Florida 32068. Interment will be at a later date in Bluefield, West Virginia. Arrangements by Hardage Giddens Holly Hill Funeral Home, 3601 Old Jennings Road Middleburg, Florida 32068. Please leave words of comfort at [www.hollyhillfunerals.com](http://www.hollyhillfunerals.com).

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on June 8 at Canterfield of Clay County, 1611 Winners Circle, Middleburg Florida 32068. Interment will be at a later date in Bluefield, West Virginia. Arrangements by Hardage Giddens Holly Hill Funeral Home, 3601 Old Jennings Road Middleburg, Florida 32068. Please leave words of comfort at [www.hollyhillfunerals.com](http://www.hollyhillfunerals.com).

## Jennifer Monique Satchell

Jennifer Monique Satchell, 38 of Middleburg, FL, passed away May 28, 2019 Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center 2335 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 904-284-7720. [www.RHRFH.com](http://www.RHRFH.com)



## Edna J. Jordan

Edna J. Jordan passed away on Monday, May 27, 2019. Aaron and Burney Bivens Funeral Home, 529 Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073, (904) 264-1233.



## Larry Nathan Thomas

Larry Nathan Thomas, 70, of Fleming Island, FL, passed away June 2, 2019. Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000



## Robert "Bob" Woolley

Robert "Bob" Woolley, 74, of Green Cove Springs, passed away May 29, 2019. Arrangements are under the care of Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center 904-284-7720



## Dorothy Wilhelmina Storey

Dorothy Wilhelmina Storey, 89, of Orange Park, FL, passed away June 2, 2019. Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000



## Daniel "Danny" Sears

Daniel "Danny" Sears, 53, passed away June 3rd, 2019. Danny was born July 13th, 1965 in Brockton, Massachusetts to the late Richard and Barbara Sears. Danny leaves behind his companion of 34 years, Barbara Webb and his brother Doug Sears and Belinda Denmark. Danny is remembered with love by Eric, Kyndelle, John, and Charlie Hart as well as Prescott, Cherish, Jonathan, and Anna Rowe.



## Successful Concert on the Green collects \$12,000 to benefit Clay County art, music students

This year's Concert on the Green earned more than \$12,000 for Clay County students for scholarships and donations to school music and art departments. As part of this granting process, the Senior Division winners of the Concerto Competition, Jack Lyons, Fleming Island High School Instrumentalist, and Sydney Copeland, Vocalist, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, had the opportunity to perform alongside the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra thanks to funding from Concert on the Green and arrangements made with the symphony to rehearse. This year's Concert on the Green was held on May 25 at the Plantation Sports Complex on Fleming Island. Pictured, from left, are Clay High art teacher Catharine Mallard, first-place poster winner Shelby McLees and Concert on the Green Board member Nancy Jones.

## Garden Club of Orange Park installs new officers

ORANGE PARK – The Installation of Officers for the 2019-2021 term of the Garden Club of Orange Park was recently held at its Garden Center.

Past President Rita Harper (2005-2007) officiated as the new officers were installed and presented with a tea cup floral arrangement of roses and baby's breath.

The new officers are President Mary Lee Lacey, 1st Vice President Linda Fonferek, 2nd Vice President Ethelia Perry, Recording Secretary Ruth Johansen, Treasurer Sadako Long and Corresponding Secretary Faye Irvin.

Immediate Past President Virginia Singer presented Mary Lee with her Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Presidents Pin and wished her a successful term. The members and guests enjoyed tea party



The new officers are, from left, President Mary Lee Lacey, 1st Vice President Linda Fonferek, 2nd Vice President Ethelia Perry, Recording Secretary Ruth Johansen, Treasurer Sadako Long and Corresponding Secretary Faye Irvin.

themed refreshments following the ceremony.

The four Circles which comprise the Club will not be meeting again until September, but interested individuals may contact Ethelia Perry, Membership Chair, for more information about the Club and its programs by email at [ethelia@comcast.net](mailto:ethelia@comcast.net).

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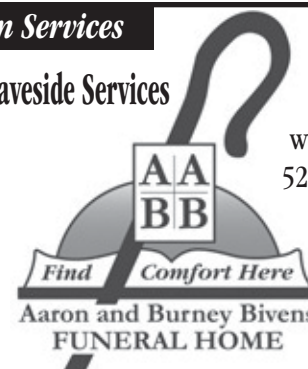


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# Middleburg's Popovic earns Chamber's award for military excellence

## Naval aircrewman 1 of 16 soldiers honored by VyStar at annual luncheon

By Don Coble  
Managing Editor

ORANGE PARK – Naval Aircrewman Operator 1st Class Chris Popovic wasn't at the Thrasher-Horne Center on Thursday, May 30, to accept his plaque as this year's winner of the VyStar Credit Union Award for Military Excellence because he was away doing what he does best – defending the U.S.

Popovic was one of 16 soldiers honored at the annual Clay Chamber Military Appreciation Luncheon. His wife, Christina, accepted the award.

When reached by email, Popovic was overwhelmed by the recognition.

"This has been an incredible year in my career," he said. "I know there were many deserving candidates submitted and to have been selected to receive the award is

truly an honor.

"I want to say that I didn't do any of it on my own. I wouldn't be the sailor or person I am today without the love and support of my wife and family. Also, I have been blessed to have great leaders and mentors who put their trust in me and so many great Sailors that I've been privileged to work alongside with.

"It's an honor, one I am truly grateful for. Thank you again!"

Petty Officer Popovic is from Fairview Park, Ohio. His first duty station was on-board USS Kitty Hawk, CV-63, forward deployment to Yokosuka, Japan.

In 2008, he joined VP-30 and trained to take his skills airborne. He joined VP-47 and deployed to Okinawa, Iraq, Sigonella and Djibouti.

He has two air medals, two Navy commendation medals, two Navy achievement medals, Iraqi Campaign medal with Bronze Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal and Military Outstanding Volunteer



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PHOTO COURTESY OF DANA HEISLER, HEISLER STUDIOS

Christina Popovic, right, accepts the Award for Military Excellence for her husband, Chris Popovic. Amy Pope-Wells presented the sailor, who was on forward deployment, with the plaque.

Service Medal.

His commanding officer, Robert Wilkerson, put it best, saying: "Petty Officer Popovic is an exceptional sailor. He embodies

every leadership trait required for achieving extraordinary accomplishments."

According to VyStar, "The award for

**SEE AWARD, 11**

# CCSO: With growth comes greater challenges to keep pace

## Annual report reveals record number of calls in 2018

By Don Coble  
Managing Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – As the population continues to grow in Clay County, so do the number of calls and crimes for the Clay County Sheriff's Office.

And with that comes the need for additional resources.

The county's population grew by more than 4,000 residents to 203,291 from 2017 to 2018. According to the U.S. Census, it's currently projected at nearly 216,000.

With a just 15 additional deputies compared to 2017, the sheriff's office is answering a record number of calls, according to the agency's recently-released annual report.

According to the sheriff's office, the agency was called 299,948 times in 2017, which led to 5,255 arrests. Last year, the department received 304,627 calls and made 5,931 arrests, for an increase of 4,679 calls and 676 arrests.

There were 4,619 inmates booked into the Clay County Jail during 2018.

There currently are about 275 sworn deputies, according to CCSO, and they patrol 644 square miles. Information gathered for the annual report don't reflect calls and arrests for the city police departments at Green Cove Springs and Orange Park.

Based on population, Clay County currently is 47 deputies short of other counties. The state average for deputies is one for every 1,720 residents. Clay County has one for every 1,488.

"We are challenged by are deficit in deputies, so we intend on seeking a budget increase with the hopes of adding more personnel," said spokesman and deputy Chris Padgett.

The sheriff's office had an operating budget of \$47,777,499 in 2018 with the

bulk – \$37,794,691 – going to personnel.

CCSO is working in new areas to spread its footprints. According to the report, it is trying to expand its technology to add more eyes and ears on the street.

According to the report, three primary focuses are the License Plate Leader pro-

gram, Clay Community Connect and a larger social media audience.

The report states:

"During 2018, the Crime Analysis Unit initiated a License Plate Reader program within Clay County. The cameras read over

**SEE CCSO, 11**

## TOWN OF ORANGE PARK FISCAL YEARS 2019-2020 ENDING 2023-2024 5 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT	2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR	2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR	2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR	2022-2023 FISCAL YEAR	2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR	5 YEAR TOTAL
POLICE	\$130,000	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$126,000	\$120,000	\$646,000
FIRE	\$20,000	\$35,000	\$19,000	\$0	\$30,000	\$104,000
AMBULANCE & RESCUE	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS	\$21,000	\$18,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$39,000
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE	\$55,000	\$50,000	\$65,000	\$90,000	\$95,000	\$355,000
STREETS	\$127,000	\$90,000	\$140,000	\$72,000	\$65,000	\$494,000
MAGNOLIA CEMETERY	\$2,116,000	\$1,425,000	\$1,554,700	\$1,449,000	\$1,255,000	\$7,799,700
NON DEPARTMENT WATER/SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS	\$8,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000
STORMWATER	\$5,000	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$145,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,680,000</b>	<b>\$1,985,000</b>	<b>\$1,765,000</b>	<b>\$1,780,000</b>	<b>\$1,772,000</b>	<b>\$9,982,000</b>
	<b>\$3,060,000</b>	<b>\$725,000</b>	<b>\$825,000</b>	<b>\$1,775,000</b>	<b>\$575,000</b>	<b>\$6,960,000</b>
	<b>\$8,222,000</b>	<b>\$4,523,000</b>	<b>\$4,538,700</b>	<b>\$5,322,000</b>	<b>\$3,942,000</b>	<b>\$26,547,700</b>

The Capital Improvement Program is available for inspection at Town Hall, 2042 Park Avenue, Orange Park, Florida, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday at the Town Clerk's Office. A public hearing will take place on this program on June 25 2019, 7:00 pm, at Town Hall, 2042 Park Avenue, Orange Park, Florida.

# Play 60: Jaguars WR Cole has a ball joining Lakeside students on playground

By Nick Blank  
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – About 100 students at Lakeside Elementary braved 95-degree heat to receive a donation of more than 100 balls for the school’s winning entry promoting the Play 60 program.

Children then tore into the packaging and threw the tennis balls, footballs, basketballs, baseballs and soccer balls in the air. They played with Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Keelan Cole and team mascot, Jaxson de Ville.

The Play 60 initiative, supported by the American Heart Association and the National Football League, encourages kids to play at least an hour a day.

Lakeside physical education teacher Kim Tracanna-Breault said she was proud of Lakeside’s involvement and its seven years in the program.

“My kids made the awesome video,” Tracanna-Breault said. “They really believe in playing for 60 minutes and improving their health.”

In April, the Jaguars sponsored “Bring a Ball to the Ball” at the First Coast Heart and Stroke Ball, where the equipment was donated. American Heart Association’s Youth Marketing Director Jacqueline East-erling, who leads efforts in three counties, said the goal was to teach students about



Students braved blistering 95-degree temperatures to play outside with balls delivered by the Jacksonville Jaguars. Lakeside Elementary was selected for their participation in the NFL’s Play 60 program that encourages children to play outside for at least an hour a day.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO  
Students and teachers recently were thrilled when Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Keelan Cole and mascot Jackson de Ville stopped by Lakeside Elementary to donate more than 100 balls as recognition of the school’s commitment to Play 60.

heart health and physical activity.

“It encourages students to get at least 60 minutes of vigorous activity or exercise every day,” she said.

Fifth-graders Derek Rekos and Calvin Johnson, who were part of the team that made the video, called the visit from the Jaguars an honor. The students’ video explained the benefits of exercise in relation to the heart, fat and fun.

“The video was fun and very nice to create,” Rekos said.

“It’s very special and kind of insane,” Johnson added. “A lot of these people are well-known and we’re a small school here in Orange Park.”

In the sweltering heat, Cole was quickly swarmed by the Lakeside students and played basketball. He said there was no replacement for going outdoors.

“It’s about the kids going outside and having as much fun as they need,” Cole said. “I don’t mind iPads and stuff, but it’s always fun to go outside, be active and burn some fat.”

On his way out, Cole touted the Jaguars to improve on their 5-11 outing last year.

“Of course, we’re going to try and go undefeated like everybody else wants to,” Cole said. “That’s all there is about that.”

**It started when he lost his job. Then, he couldn’t find another job. Then, he sunk into a place you tried to reach. Then, you started to worry as his moods started swinging. Then, he casually mentioned ending “it” all, and he didn’t say anything when you asked what “it” meant and he had a gun and he wasn’t afraid to use it and you didn’t know how to stop him, but there is one thing you can do: remove the gun for now.**

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**CCSO**  
from page 9

1,000,000 license plates in the first ninety days of the program. The cameras played a pivotal role in solving several cases in 2018, including a bank robbery, burglary to autos, a missing person, and an aggravated battery in which an individual was shot. Plans include expanding the system with additional cameras throughout the county.

“Clay Community Connect (C3) is a new program intended to reduce crime and the fear of crime. C3 accomplishes this by establishing relationships with businesses and homeowners who subsequently allow

the Clay County Sheriff’s Office access to cameras installed on their property. The Sheriff’s Office can access the cameras to obtain real-time information about crime as it occurs.”

The agency relies heavily on Facebook and Twitter to warn residents of missing people, traffic accidents and emergencies. It also relies on social media to have the community report crimes, missing persons and wanted fugitives.

The report also included an introduction letter from Sheriff Darryl Daniels. He said, in part:

“As we look forward to 2019, we will be experiencing a large growth in our population. We have housing developments, businesses and the new interstate growing daily. That being said, CCSO will need to grow to keep up with the demands for additional law enforcement services. We will work hard to continue to make Clay County the safest place to live and raise a family. Increasing our staffing, leveraging technology and of course community engagement will be our priority as we work diligently on delivering what is stated in our mission statement: ‘Reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime, and improve the quality of life.’”

The report also revealed:

-The CCSO cleared 95.92-percent of its

special victim’s unit cases; 90.84-percent of its robbery/homicide cases; 46.07-percent of its criminal investigation cases; and, 82.72-percent of its financial crime cases.

-A slight decrease in traffic accidents compared to 2017 and fewer arrests for driving under the influence. There were 5,403 reported crashes in 2018 – a reduction of 167 – and 141 DUI arrests – compared to 161 from 2017.

-The Canine Unit added two handlers and an additional dog that dramatically increased the number of arrests. The K9 Unit was involved with 1,752 traffic stops, 31 building and 602 narcotic searches which led to 155 arrests last year, the report stated. In 2017, the K9 Unit was involved in 1,232 traffic stops, 19 building and 472 narcotic searches that led to only 55 arrests.

-There were 3,188 incidents reported at the Clay County Jail, including 1,227 routine cell searches, and 410,391 meals served to inmates.

-The agency was able to hire 125 new employees – and increase of 20 compared to 2017.

-There were 228 official complaints against the office, an increase of 50 compared to the previous year. The biggest increase was for 39 additional policy violations, from 36 to 75.

-There were 22 official disciplinary actions taken against the department, compared to 34 in 2017.

-Other than salaries, the No. 1 expense – \$871,821 – for the sheriff’s office was medical and dental services for inmates.

-The Sheriff’s Office wrote 11,210 tickets. Of those, 8,898, or 79.44 percent, were written to white motorists and 1,985 were written to African Americans, or 17.72 percent. Both were about 6 percent higher than the racial percentages of whites and African Americans in the county.

**Award**  
from page 9

military excellence is presented annually to a service member that constantly demonstrates a high degree of excellence, professionalism and integrity in the performance of their duties, and who has proven their willingness to help others throughout our community.”

Rear Admiral Gary A. Mayes, Commander Navy Region Southeast, delivered the keynote address. He talked of the importance of protecting the interests of the U.S. on both land and sea, especially since the International Maritime Organization said more than 90 percent of the world’s trade is carried by sea.

Other servicemen honored were: Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Andrew Marton; Hospital Corpsman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sheena Murray, Hospital Corpsman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Ezequiel Gonzalez. Hospital Corpsman 2<sup>nd</sup>

Class Joshua Lazenby; Camp Blanding Joint Training Center Sgt. Robert Naja III, Staff Sgt. Taylor Peters; Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class John Yulee and Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Edward Sears; Aviation Machinist’s Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class Ramon Vargas; Aviation Structural Mechanic 1<sup>st</sup> Class John Blood; Electronics Technician 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Bryan Brayer; Yeoman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Carol Gardenas, Naval Aircrewman Operator 1<sup>st</sup> Class Blake Delise, Florida Air National Guard Technical Sgt. Steven Eversole; and, Naval Aircrewman Tactical Helicopter 1<sup>st</sup> Class Scott Fetterhoff.

**Gator Basketball Coach Mike White to speak**

Will be available June 25 for a question and answer session at the Courtyard by Marriott at 610 Wells Rd., Orange Park. Doors open at 5 p.m., with White taking questions at 6:30 p.m.

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 <p>Lot 2-51 3 bd / 2.5 ba / study / 3rd car was <b>\$359,500</b> now <b>\$322,400</b></p>	 <p>Lot 14 4 bd / 3 ba / study was <b>\$326,900</b> now <b>\$299,500</b></p>
 <p>Lot 119 4 bd / 3.5 ba / rec room / 3rd car was <b>\$368,900</b> now <b>\$348,500</b></p>	 <p>Lot 106 4 bd / 3 ba / 3rd car was <b>\$353,900</b> now <b>\$337,500</b></p>

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# Business Briefs



From left, Shaun Jackson, Renee Large, Kris Obergfoll and Thomas Marcy all earned assessing officers' professional designations.

## Property Appraiser employees earn professional designations

CLAY COUNTY – Roger Suggs, CFA, AAS, CCF, Clay County Property Appraiser, announced that Renee Large, Kristofer Obergfoll, Shaun Jackson and Thomas Marcy recently earned professional designations from the International Association of Assessing Officers.

The IAAO offers six professional designations and is a nonprofit, educational association whose mission is to provide innovation and excellence in property appraisal, property tax policy and administration through professional development, education, research, and technical assistance. IAAO members subscribe to a Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct and the Uniform Standard of Professional Appraisal Practice.

Large and Obergfoll earned the Assessment Administration Specialist designation, Jackson earned the Residential Evaluation Specialist designation and Marcy earned the Personal Property Specialist designation.

By earning their designations, they join an exclusive club of assessment professionals. Additionally, each of the new designees were recognized for their efforts by receiving the Anthony Hodge Educational Award at the Florida Chapter of the International Association of Assessing Officers annual conference in St. Petersburg.

## Community Hospice and Palliative Care moves to expanded office

FLEMING ISLAND – Community Hospice and Palliative Care continued to expand last week with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its newest office on Fleming Island. This is its eighth office throughout its 16-county service area and it expanded its 40-year relationship in Clay County.

As a result of continued expansion, Community Hospice and Palliative Care outgrew its former office location at its Blanding Boulevard location in Orange Park. The decision was made to find a location with ample parking, increased office space and community meeting space where Clay County groups and residents could meet free of charge. The new location in Fleming Island increases the overall footprint by 1,000 square feet to better serve the community.

Established in 1979, Community Hospice and Palliative Care is an innovative national leader in palliative and hospice care, as well as providing programs and services to meet the diverse needs of the communities it serves. During its 40-year history, Community Hospice and Palliative Care has served nearly 200,000 adults and



From left to right: Philip Ward, Community Hospice & Palliative Care COO; Tim McDaniel, Community Hospice & Palliative Care Chaplain; Connie Butler, Council Member, Green Cove Springs; Susan Ponder-Stansel, President and CEO, Community Hospice & Palliative Care; Alan Watt, Vice Mayor, Town of Orange Park; Dr. Joseph M. Parra, Chief Medical Officer, Orange Park Medical Center; Steven Kelly, Mayor, Green Cove Springs; Dr. Sue Leger-Krall, Board Member, Community Hospice & Palliative Care; Marcus McInarnay, Board Member, Community Hospice & Palliative Care Foundation; Mary McElroy, Senior Vice President of Hospice Services, Community Hospice & Palliative Care; Andrea Fritz, Vice President of Finance, Community Hospice & Palliative Care; Carlos Bosque, CFO, Community Hospice & Palliative Care

children in Clay, Baker, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties, and recently expanded its service area to include 11 counties in north-central Florida. Through the support of more than 900 employees and 1,000 volunteers, the organization helps approximately 1,600 patients a day to live better with advanced illness – at home, in long-term care and assisted living facilities, in hospitals and at its eight inpatient care centers.

## Heady joins Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices on Fleming Island

FLEMING ISLAND – Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is pleased to welcome Ryan Heady to the Fleming Island/Orange Park office.

Ryan joins Florida Network Realty with a strong background in sales. Previously the Purchase Specialist and Sales Associate at Deerwood Family Eyecare, Ryan knows that his attention to detail and problem-solving skills that he had gained will help him in his new career as a Real-

tor with Florida Network Realty.

When asked why he became a Realtor with Florida Network Realty, Ryan states,

“I love the ability to help people create the life they want – building relationships with my clients is of utmost importance to me. As a Realtor, utilizing my sales experience, my desire to superb customer service and clear communication leads to the best results for my clients.”

“We are all excited about working with Ryan! He will be a great addition to the Fleming Island team and will be able to utilize his vast customer service experience and professionalism in his real estate career at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty,” said Linda Benson, Broker/Manager of the Fleming Island/Orange Park office.



Ryan Heady

## PET ADOPTIONS



### SONNY

Scooby Do? This Scooby does! Sonny is a tall, light grey and handsome mature boy. With his breed laid-back and gentle temperament, Sonny is sure to make a great family pet. This boy is just all round nice, well-mannered and calm who is looking for a BIG hairbrush, yummy food and lots of love. Do you have a couch with his name on it? It seems that no-one has yet been able to see past his size and into the wonderful heart of this dog. Treat him like the treasure he is and this big boy will return the love ten-fold. Ask the shelter about the command he knows (sit, down, speak, shake).



### GATO

Gato is a black domestic long hair handsome male cat that is very sweet and calm, loves to cuddle. At 11 year old, he is still curious and his dream would be to find a forever home with a patio where he can enjoy watching the outdoors and passerby's. If you are that special person that would like to make his dream come true, come to Safe Animal Shelter and meet him. He will not disappoint you.

Safe Animal Shelter | 2913 County Road 220 Middleburg | 904-276-7233  
Wednesday-Sunday 12pm-5pm | [www.safeanimalshelter.com](http://www.safeanimalshelter.com)

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# Sailor

from page 1

to work with and have displayed the utmost professionalism and care throughout this process.

"In the case of Chief Baker, we are thrilled that the community chose his name for the new VA clinic and know that his service will be remembered and an example to all. When his wife Tina presented his story at the workshop, not a dry eye was left in the room when she said that all she wanted was for Andy's name to be remembered. Today, we can be sure he will always be remembered."

Antisubmarine Warfare Chief Baker died with his Trident 615 H-60 Seahawk crashed off the coast of North Carolina while trying to land on a frigate to refuel during a SEAL training event. All four on board were killed. Baker was attached to HS-3 homeported at NAS Jacksonville and he served on the USS Carl Vinson and USS Coral Sea as a Ship's Serviceman.

His wife, Tina Baker, spent years trying to make sure her husband's memory would be forever remembered.

Tina Baker originally presented a case to have an air crew candidate school in Pensacola named after her husband, but he finished second in the voting, she said.

"He was a simple man doing his job," she said. "The things that come from simple things sometimes become life lessons. Now I can put this to bed. It's done. I have great peace from this."

The mix of rough seas, the pitch of a frigate, visual disorientation caused by night vision goggles and fatigue were likely factors in the accident. The Navy has since reviewed many of its training policies.

"It was a teachable moment," Tina Baker said.

The wife was concerned her husband's memory eventually would be lost by time and paperwork. "There's going to be some goodness from all of this," she said. "Now it's going to be remembered."

The Clay County VA Clinic has been a five-year initiative for Yoho. In 2014, the congressman secured the funds for the project and worked through three requests for proposals in order to get the current site. Construction is slated to begin this summer with the opening target date set for spring of 2020.

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ONE OWNER, CLEAN CARFAX/NO ACCIDENTS REPORTED, BLUETOOTH/HANDS FREE CELL PHONE, REAR BACK UP CAMERA, FRESH LEASE RETURN, FRESH OIL CHANGE, LOW MILES, 121 POINT INSPECTION, P20187

**\$16,250**



**2017 CHEVY COLORADO**

ONE OWNER, CLEAN CARFAX/NO ACCIDENTS REPORTED, BLUETOOTH/HANDS FREE CELL PHONE, REAR BACK UP CAMERA, FRESH OIL CHANGE, 121 POINT INSPECTION, REMAINDER OF FACTORY WARRANTY, 4WD, P20182

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# OPC fails to change land development regulations

By Wesley LeBlanc  
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – An ordinance that would have made changes to land development regulations, including expedited plans for a new car wash, died without a vote Tuesday night, June 4, during the Orange Park Town Council meeting.

On March 14, the town's Planning and Zoning Board approved a recommendation to the town council to amend Section 2.04.00 of the Land Development Regulations pertaining to Table II.1. The amendment contained 10 regulation changes. When it came before the council on Tuesday, despite the recommendation to amend this section of town code, the council failed to garner a second, which means the motion died on the floor.

"No second?" Mayor Connie Thomas asked. "Then it fails."

After the council made its way to the end of the agenda and to the council member reports and comments, Vice Mayor Alan Watt talked about car washes in Orange Park, shedding light why the motion failed.

"[Town Attorney Sam Garrison], what can we do about this car wash thing?" Watt asked. "Can we somehow pull this back and send it back to [Planning and Zoning] and [Environmental Quality Board]?"

After some clarification, Watt explained he was specifically referring to the car wash site plan that he said was recently rushed through for Plainfield Avenue and Kingsley Avenue without the Environmental Quality Board being involved.

"Our land development regulations are such that...if our regulations say that you

as a property owner can utilize that property for a commercial purpose consistent with zoning and you go through the process of making a site plan that conforms with our [land development regulations], and planning and zoning says, 'we may not like the use but...we believe that you're lawfully allowed to use this under our laws,' I don't think there is much you can do," Garrison said.

Watt said he believes the car wash can't necessarily be disallowed in town, but he questioned if anything could be done about clearing of trees that's part of the car wash plans.

"It's another tree lot and the last thing we need around here is another clear-cut lot and another paved area," Watt said.

Garrison responded and said if the site

plan presented is consistent with the standards set by the town's land development regulations, then there is nothing it can do to stop it.

It's likely a new car wash will soon be making its way into Orange Park.

Later in the discussion, the council pondered on how to prevent this from happening in future cases. Garrison said they can create new laws that disallow businesses that use high volumes of water from opening as long as the law is non-discriminatory. For example, if a new laundromat used as much as water as a car wash, it wouldn't be allowed, too.

Watt still wants to see what could be done about stopping future car washes, but Garrison said the town simply cannot single out a specific type of business.

## Green Cove Springs sets dates for next year's Food Truck Fridays

By Nick Blank  
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Tuesday night's 50-minute city council meeting had a last-day-of-school feel with most of the meeting addressing staff.

Council members honored former Mayor Connie Butler, said goodbye to long-time Planning and Zoning board member Bob Lewis, welcomed new City Clerk Erin West, and appointed or retained residents on boards.

Butler, who began her second three-year term in April, called being the mayor a great feeling for someone who grew up in the city. Butler was joined by her family as each council member spoke on her year as mayor.

"It's something special," Butler said.

Mayor Steven Kelley said Butler served as an example for him as he assumes his year as mayor.

"I saw what [Butler] was able to do and it gave me confidence to get up here and hopefully do this job well over the next year," he said.

## Community Calendar

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE: Meets June 13 at 10 a.m. at the Clay County Administration Building's Zoning Department conference room, third floor at 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs.

CLAY BRIDAL SPECTACULAR: June 15 at the Thrasher-Horne Center, 283 College Dr., Orange Park. Event will feature selection of wedding professionals who can find the perfect gown, makeup, wedding décor, invitations, photographer, florist, music and menus. Tickets are \$5 in advance, \$10 at the door, and they're available online at THcenter.org or by calling the box office at (904) 276-6815.

Food Truck Friday's 2020 schedule was approved in the consent agenda. The event dates are March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 17, Aug. 14, Sept. 11, Oct. 2 and Nov. 13.

At Spring Park, last month's Food Truck Friday crowd was estimated at 5,000. Organizer Ed Gaw said the 13 food trucks sold out of their signature items.

"There's a combination of things working at the park," Gaw said. "Everybody enjoys it, and everybody loves it. We'll see what this Friday brings."

The city also received its Annual Water Quality Report for 2018. The report is mandated by the state Department of Environmental Protection.

There were no violations. The city tested well below the Maximum Contaminant Levels for inorganic contaminants, disinfectants and disinfectant byproducts in the water.

"It's just a normal requirement and our folks do a great job keeping an eye on that," City Manager Steve Kennedy said.



Dr. William P. Register  
First Assembly Fleming Island

## Faith Walk

### True Valor

Many people live daily with challenging issues that affect every moment of their day. They face life with hardships that most of us will never truly understand. The person in the wheelchair, the individual born with down syndrome, the one facing the debilitation of multiple sclerosis, and more and more are examples of the conditions I am addressing.

Just for a moment, think about how different your life would be if you were living with one of these challenges or another one I have not mentioned.

According to a broad definition of disability, about 56.7 million people – 19 percent of the population — had a disability in 2010. More than half of them reported the disability was severe. This is according to a comprehensive report on the population released by the U.S. Census Bureau. That is about one of every five people in this country.

Every Sunday I see people just like this. They are the courageous ones! They inspire me! And they cause me to give thanks to God every day. I must be thankful for the blessing God has allowed me to live in a well, whole body.

And those of you with a disability must maintain your faith and trust in the love of God. While breath flows through your body, you are still here for God's high purpose. You are here because God has a plan for you!

I salute you as you are faithful in your suffering. You hold up a light that encourages us to know that God can bring us through anything.

We live with many conditions we do not understand. But understanding is not required for us to have faith! We trust regardless of the conditions or situations.

In the midst of your challenges, stay faithful to God. Do everything in your service to Him that you possibly can do. Some things are not possible for you. But do everything in His service that is possible for you to do. Don't quit! Continuing to serve and believe God causes your light shine brighter as it pierces through the shadows of the conditions of your life.

Stand for the Lord! You are holding me up to stand with you! Thank you!

www.firstagcc.org. Write the pastor at PastorBill@firstagcc.org.

## Keystone

from page 2

the program at previous meetings. Council members had been looking for ways to thwart vandalism, most notably incidents at Keystone Beach earlier in the year.

"What this program does is give the sheriff's office real-time access to security cameras in municipalities," Kornegay said. "It comes at no cost to the city."

In other business, council members discussed the city's policy regarding fowl within city limits. The current ordinance says residents, "... may keep, on the owner's property, one and only one, hen chicken, drake, duck or drake, or other domestic fowl, which is considered a household pet by the occupants." Council members had a hard time keeping a straight face.

Council Member Tony Brown shot down the idea of increasing the limit citing cleanliness, and Hart agreed. The discussion was dropped.



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## Oakleaf Village Elementary raises more than \$20,000 for American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge

### For Clay Today

OAKLEAF – Students in many elementary schools in Oakleaf, Clay County, the First Coast and around the country have been participating in The Kids Heart Challenge to move their bodies toward heart health, earn benefits for their schools and give back to their community this school year.

The American Heart Association-First Coast announced Oakleaf Village Elementary was the highest fundraising school for the challenge with more than \$20,000 this year – more than any other school on the First Coast.

Since 2009, Oakleaf Village has raised more than \$212,000 for the work of the American Heart Association. Much of the success of the program is due to the hard work and commitment of Physical Education teacher, Rose Woolwine.

"The Kids Heart Challenge is a great way to teach students about heart health and the benefits of living a healthy life," Woolwine said. "I also love the charitable aspect of it and helping others. I am extremely grateful to the faculty and staff at Oakleaf Village Elementary, as well our parents and community, for embracing this worthy cause and supporting our Kids Heart Challenge event.

Funds the challenge supports advocacy initiatives to keep physical education in schools, ensures kids have access to healthy foods and provides resources to advocate for CPR in school laws that ensure every student knows how to save a life. Since 1949, the Association has funded \$4.1 billion in research since 1949 and currently funds 2,000 scientists around the United States.

The Kids Heart Challenge encourages heart-healthy behavior as students pledge to be more physically active, drink more water and do a good deed. For teachers, the challenge offers four activations to get students' hearts pumping:

- Kids Heart Challenge Jump – With jump ropes in hand, students learn about the many health benefits of jumping rope – it burns calories, build agility and increases bone density – while competing in challenges to complete the most jumps in a minute.

- Kids Heart Challenge Hoops – Playing basketball not only builds character, it re-

veals it through team work and comradery. Students aim, shoot, cheer and celebrate as they take the court for Kids Heart Challenge Hoops. It's not only fun for them; it's good for their emotional well-being.

- Kids Heart Challenge Dance – Students will get moving and laughing as they dance to the "Cha-Cha Slide" or "Space Jam" and show off their hip-hop or Virginia reel skills. As the dancing gets under way, students understand that feel good feeling from their heads down to their toes. They'll get plenty of physical activity while learning self-confidence, creativity, and collaboration.

- Kids Heart Challenge Warrior – The obstacle course where students crawl, run and leap their way to a cardio-pumping great time as they dart through cones, fly over hurdles or tip-toe across the balance beam. Warrior events give students feelings of achievement and strength while they cheer each other on. Let the games begin!

In addition to the new activations, the Kids Heart Challenge provides enhanced give-backs, direct contributions to schools and new curriculum for teachers supporting whole-child centered learning. Certificates to purchase physical education equipment are available. Participating schools are also eligible to apply for the new grant program, furthering the health impact teachers can have with their students. The enhanced curriculum available with the Kids Heart Challenge includes a series of classroom-based physical activity plans and resources that support social and emotional learning.

Teachers also gain access to OPEN (Online Physical Education Network) which provides physical education curriculum resources and physical activity programming.

More information about Kids Heart Challenge is available online at [heart.org/kidsheartchallenge](http://heart.org/kidsheartchallenge). Educators and challenge coordinators may also join the new Kids Heart Challenge Facebook group at [www.facebook.com/group/kidsheartchallenge](http://www.facebook.com/group/kidsheartchallenge) to share stories, best practices, and successes.

To learn more about other school programs, or to make a donation to the American Heart Association, please visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).



From left, Oakleaf Village Elementary's Nolan Woolwine raised more than \$1,000 – the most of any student at the school – and he was presented with an award by Jacqueline Easterling, youth marketing director for the American Heart Association-First Coast. Physical Education teacher Rose Woolwine also was given an award for helping her school raise more than \$20,000.

### Florida Department of Transportation SUBSEQUENT PUBLIC HEARING

#### County Road 220

from Henley Road to Knight Boxx Road  
Financial Project ID: 430719-2-22-01  
Clay County, Florida

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) invites you to attend the Public Hearing for the proposed improvements to County Road (CR) 220 from Henley Road to Knight Boxx Road in Clay County, Florida. **The Public Hearing will be held on Monday, June 17, 2019 at Highpoint Community Church located at 84 Knight Boxx Road, Orange Park, Florida 32065.** The hearing will begin at 4:30 pm to give you an opportunity to review the exhibits and talk one-on-one with FDOT staff. A formal presentation will take place at 6:30 pm followed by a public comment period.

The FDOT is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate alternatives to enhance safety and provide additional capacity to meet existing and future travel demand on CR 220. This subsequent Public Hearing is to present changes made to the CR 220/Henley Road intersection that have taken place since the April 2018 Public Hearing. These changes relocate the left turn lanes from the CR 220/Henley Road intersection to the CR 220/Rideout Ferry Road intersection. FDOT encourages you to get involved throughout the study by providing comments, concerns, questions and/or suggestions to the Study Team.

As of May 27, 2019, project documents will be available for review at the following locations:

**Jacksonville Urban Office**  
2198 Edison Avenue  
Jacksonville, FL 32204  
(904) 360-5457

**Middleburg-Clay Hill Library**  
2245 Aster Ave  
Middleburg, FL 32068  
(904) 541-5855

**Clay County Headquarter Library**  
1895 Town Center Boulevard  
Fleming Island, FL 32003  
(904) 278-3720

Persons wishing to submit written comments may do so at the public hearing or mail/email them to the address provided no later than **June 27, 2019**.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact David Tyler, at the number provided below at least 7 days before the hearing.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016, and executed by Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

#### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

**David Tyler, P.E., Project Manager**  
Florida Department of Transportation  
1109 South Marion Avenue, MS 2007  
Lake City, FL 32025-5874  
Phone: (386) 961-7842 or (800) 749-2967 ext. 7842  
Email: [David.Tyler@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:David.Tyler@dot.state.fl.us)

## County Health: It's never too early to get school vaccinations

ORANGE PARK – Students already can get their school vaccinations for next year at the Florida Department of Health's Bear Run Clinic, 3229 Bear Run Blvd.

The clinic is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Department of Health in Clay County's summer theme is "Don't Wait, Vaccinate!"

For more information, call (904) 529-2800.

# Hurricane

from page 1

Flood waters are the biggest concern for Clay County. Residents along Black Creek in Middleburg still are digging through the damage left by Hurricane Irma from nearly two years ago.

The St. Johns River Water Management District is more than ready for the worst Mother Nature may dish up this storm season.

“We’ve recently reached a technological milestone in operating our flood control structures in the Upper St. John River Basin and Moss Bluff Dam,” said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle. “We have the ability to operate flood control structures from remote locations using a computer, tablet or even a cell phone. This allows us to adjust water levels prior to or during a hurricane without risking the safety of our staff.”

The district operates flood-control structures in the Upper Ocklawaha River Basin – the Apopka-Beauclair Lock and Dam, Apopka Dam, Moss Bluff Dam and the Burrell Dam — to create additional capacity when necessary. Similarly, the Upper St. Johns River Basin Project has gate structures to allow water to flow north, increasing water storage capacity.

Each year, the district’s experienced staff participates in statewide disaster preparedness training with Florida’s emergency officials. The agency has also weathered many hurricanes and tropical storms, assisting local governments and communities before and in the aftermath of devastating storms, most recently Hurricane Michael in 2018, Hurricane Irma in 2017 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016. A list of local government flooding contacts is available on the district’s website at [www.sjrwmd.com/localgovernment/flooding](http://www.sjrwmd.com/localgovernment/flooding).

## Things to do now

-First, make a checklist of everything that needs to be done. It’s much easier to work from a script in a time of crisis than flailing during a crisis.

-Make copies of your important papers and seal them in a waterproof zip-lock bag.

-Plan an evacuation route.



-Make sure everyone in your family has a time or place to meet if they get separated.

-Call ahead to see if a shelter accepts pets.

-Sign up for emergency smart phone alerts from Clay County Emergency Management, National Weather Service and Florida Department of Transportation.

“Being informed is hugely valuable,” said Glenn East, interim director of the county’s emergency management office.

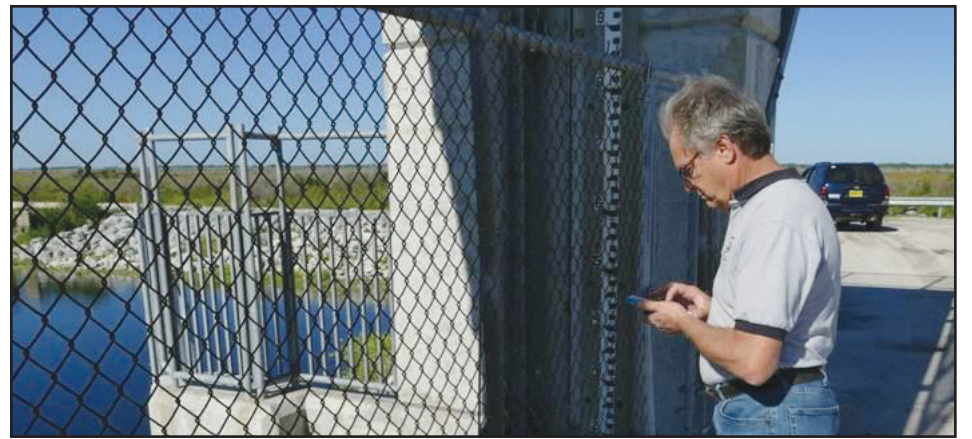
To sign up for Clay’s emergency alerts, go to [ALERT.claycountygov.com](http://ALERT.claycountygov.com).

## Complete as soon as possible

-Make a go-bag with important papers, photos, medications and basic clothing that can be easily and quickly accessed.

-Have material on standby to protect windows and secure your property.

-Stock up on necessary supplies to survive for five days like water, flashlights, ice chests, non-perishable foods, canned goods, manual can opener, knives, peanut butter, two-way weather band radio, plastic sheeting, tie downs, bungee cords, LP gas and kerosene containers, bandages, first aid kit, lanterns and candles, baby formula, solar battery chargers and blankets. For a complete list of necessary supplies, visit [fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354](http://fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354).



Senior engineer John Richmond uses his cell phone to test a water control structure in the Upper St. Johns River Basin Project. SJRWMD is critical to minimizing flood waters from a hurricane.

“We now say up to five days instead of three,” East said. “And now is the time to do it instead of waiting.”

Shelves are likely to be empty of many of these supplies – especially water –if you wait until a storm is approaching.

“Anything to help you maintain, anything you’d need if you were without power for five days,” East said.

## As the storm approaches

-Clear debris from your yard. If you don’t have room for lawn chairs and pool toys, throw them in the pool. They won’t blow away – and through a window – from the bottom of a pool.

-Fill bathtub with water.

-Double-check your supplies.

-Board up windows.

-Evacuate if ordered. Remember, you not only risk you and your family’s lives by staying, you’re risking the lives of emergency responders.

## During the storm

-Hopefully you’ll be watching the storm on television from a safe place. If not, stay away from windows and huddle in the center of your home where there’s a greater chance of heavier support beams.

-Don’t go outside when it suddenly

becomes calm. They call it the eye of the storm for a reason.

-Avoid creating any open flames, especially if you have any natural gas appliances.

-Stay inside! It’s too late to run now.

## After the storm

-Do an assessment of your property and report damages to your insurance company.

-Don’t drink tap water until you’re told its safe. You should have at least one gallon of water a day for each person in your family. Also, don’t ration water. There’s an old saying about surviving in the desert that applies to hurricane recovery: “Don’t die with a half-canteen of water.”

-Stay off the roads. Let the emergency crews do their jobs.

-Stay away from downed power lines.

-Help your neighbors.

-Pay attention to local media for information.

The NOAA predicts there will be two-to-four major hurricanes this year. Nobody knows if they’ll if, or where, they will make landfall.

But it’s never too early to be prepared.

For a list of web sites dedicated to hurricane preparation, visit [claytodayonline.com](http://claytodayonline.com).



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# Henderson Haven helps 50 special needs students

By Nick Blank  
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK - Henderson Haven is tucked away off Blanding Boulevard on the edge of the Fox Ridge subdivision.

Sherri and Lee Henderson started from their home, then took two suites in the Blanding location. Now they have the whole building. Considering their growth, workload and mission that's probably for the best.

The nonprofit handles afterschool care and adult transition programs for about 50 disabled persons a month. Most of their students with autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy and the intellectually disabled may have been kicked out of other programs. Sherri Henderson also does student advocacy to prepare parents for Individualized Education Plans.

The haven was founded in 2003 with one student. Lee and Sherri Henderson had experience in the caregiving field in Texas, and from raising their son Trey, who has down syndrome.

"We don't give up," Sherri Henderson said. "We really believe with the people who come in here, we're going to do everything we can."

The need for care in the county is great, but so is the need for disabled persons to become self-sufficient. When students age

out of the afterschool programs, the transition program teaches them life skills such as budgeting or using appliances.

"We presume competence, if they're 18, we treat them like an 18 year old. If they're six, we're going to treat them like a six year old," Sherri Henderson said. "Just because they can't walk, talk or feed themselves doesn't mean that they're not in there. The best part of it is seeing people come out of their shells."

It's not easy, the day before the interview, a student destroyed a door. Their service dog, Dawson, usually can calm a student down. Sherri Henderson jokes that the staff has become very adept at fixing holes.

"You've got to be flexible. Not one therapy works, not one strategy works," she added. "There's a physical toll."

Lee Henderson said the goal was for students to become contributing members of the community like Trey, who is independent and worked.

"Definitely our goal is to get them to where they can have that life," Lee Henderson said.

The Henderson's care for a severely disabled student with autism and blindness made Lee Henderson reflect.

"It reminds you real quick why you're doing this," he added. "You have to give someone a voice, that's really the first

thing."

Bridget Watkins' son, Daniel, has been with Henderson Haven since he was two. Now 21, he can balance a checkbook, bake cookies on his own and tie his shoes. Without the Hendersons, Watkins said she didn't know if Daniel would be as independent.

"She's taught me not only how to advocate for myself, but other kids as well," Watkins said.

Lisa Brown is social worker in the county. Her son Jay has attended Henderson Haven for three years. She said there was no service like the haven in Clay County.

"What they've done with my son Jay is phenomenal. It's a place where he's accepted, where he has friends. He has really excelled," Brown said. "He feels really good about going there. There was no day-care that would take him."

Kenny Hendl said his daughter with autism, Kelsey, simply couldn't get the resources in the county when they moved to the area. A friend recommended they talk to Sherri. Kelsey has gone to Henderson now for seven years.

"As soon as we got there we fell in love with the place and it's been a godsend," Hendl said. "They've been absolutely great with her."

Despite the work they do, Sherri Henderson said families or community members might not know about their services. She said buying and remodeling the building, or finding another suitable home was a future challenge.

"It is in my DNA, I will never retire," Sherri Henderson laughs.

To donate or for more information on programs offered, visit [hendersonhaven.org](http://hendersonhaven.org).



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# Police Briefs

## Three additional Oakleaf home invasion suspects behind bars

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested three more men this week for their roles in an armed home invasion on May 19.

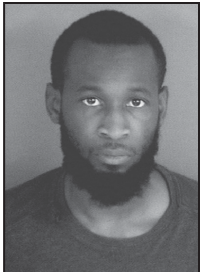
Bobby DeShawn Dunbar, 20, of Jacksonville, was being held without bond while facing charges of home invasion with a firearm or other deadly weapon, aggravated battery with a deadly weapon, grand theft of \$100,000 or more, false imprisonment and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. He was arrested near Tallahassee and transported back to the Clay County Jail on May 29.



Bobby Dunbar

He is being held without bond. His next court appearance is scheduled for July 3.

Demar Maurice Priestly, 23, of Jacksonville, was arrested on Tuesday, June 4. He was charged with home invasion with a firearm or other deadly weapon, aggravated battery with a deadly weapon, grand theft of \$100,000 or more, false imprisonment and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. He also was charged with contempt of court for not answering a summons. He is being held without bond.



Demar Priestly

Also on June 4, Brandy Jean Edward, 19, of Jacksonville was charged with conspiracy to commit armed home invasion. Her bond was set at \$100,003.



Brandy Edward

According to the Clay County Sheriff's Office, a group of people stormed into an Oakleaf home, overpowered the homeowner, bound him with zip-ties and telephone cords, threatened him by putting a gun in his mouth and pepper-spraying him until he directed them to \$140,000 that was hidden in his attic.

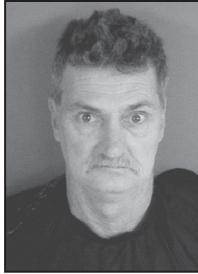
The suspects targeted the homeowner because he bragged about his successful home-based business on social media, CCSO said.

Skylar Marin Albritton, 19, of Jacksonville, was arrested on May 21 after deputies tracked her down when she contacted the victim's wife on Instagram, and Juwan Denzel Grier, 25, of Jacksonville, was arrested on May 22. They were charged with an armed home invasion, grand theft of more than \$100,00, false imprisonment and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

## Man with mobile home tag on car busted for DUI

MIDDLEBURG – A man was stopped while driving with a license tag from a mobile home, and he wound up going to jail for driving while intoxicated and endangering a child.

John Amick McBane, 54, of Middleburg was stopped on County Road 218 Wednesday, May 29, after a routine check of his tag was supposed to be on a mobile home and didn't match his car. Deputies also learned the car hadn't been registered since 2009 and McBane's license had been suspended three times since 2005.



John McBane

McBane's blood alcohol level was measured at .135 and .137. The legal limit is .08.

Since a child was riding in his car, he also was charged with endangering her.

## Middleburg man charged with 'torturing' three dogs

MIDDLEBURG – Clay County Sheriff deputies arrested a man after they found two starving dogs and a dead dog left abandoned at a home.

Douglas William Swagerty, 26, of Middleburg was charged with three counts of torture to an animal with intent to inflict intense pain after deputies found the dogs living in filth, heat and without food or water.



Douglas Swagerty

Deputies were called to a house on Oregon Trail after neighbors noticed two dogs that appeared to be abandoned. They found a beagle tied to a tree with a 12-foot rope in front of the house and an emaciated pit bull inside. With temperatures reaching 100 degrees last week, both were in extremely poor condition, according to the arrest report. An animal control officer ranked both dogs as a one or two out of 10 on the Purina Body Scale.

Another pit bull was found locked inside a bedroom. It apparently had been dead for days.

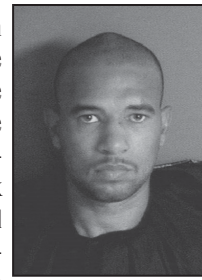
Swagerty surrender custody of the two living dogs to the Clay Humane Society, while the dead dog was taken by animal control for an autopsy.

## Disruptive man tased three times during arrest

ORANGE PARK – An unruly man had to be tased three times while he fought with two Clay County Sheriff Deputies on Thursday, May 30.

Deputies were called to investigate a suspicious person on Uranus Lane. They

found Parrish William Samford, 25, of Orange Park, standing in the middle of the road. He refused to identify himself and tried to walk away when a second deputy arrived. Samford kicked one of the officers and wrestled with both deputies before he was tased three times, according to the arrest report.



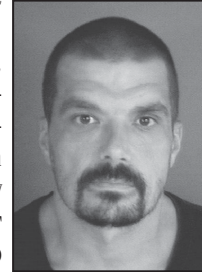
Parrish Samford

Samford was charged with resisting, obstructing and opposing a police officer.

## Jacksonville man nabbed after bragging about stealing gun

ORANGE PARK – A man made it easier on Clay County Sheriff deputies by telling friends he stolen a gun from a car parked May 12 at the Orange Park Mall.

Sean Lee Davis, 41, of Jacksonville, was arrested for armed burglary and possession of a loaded firearm by a convicted felon after deputies received a tip that Davis was bragging about the gun.



Sean Davis

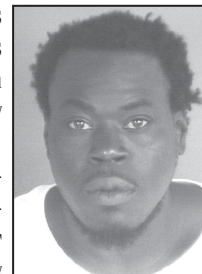
According to the arrest warrant, Davis broke into a car at the AMC Theatres and reportedly stole a .45 caliber handgun.

Davis was arrested on Thursday, May 30. His bond was set at \$100,006.

## Inmate caught with marijuana in Clay County Jail

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A Jacksonville man's problems worsened when he was caught with marijuana inside the Clay County Jail.

Allen Tarrell DeWayne Brooks, 41, already was in jail after being arrested on May 28 for grand theft. A day later, a correction's officer noticed Brooks trying to hide a something in his mouth. He eventually spit out a cellophane wrapper that contained what later was tested to be marijuana.



Allen Brooks

Deputies then added an additional charge – introduction of contraband into a detention center.

## Woman jailed for taking cash, exploiting unmindful victim

ORANGE PARK – Tanya Lynn Garman, 49, recently was arrested for cashing checks and using credit cards from a victim who eventually was placed into an assisted living home.



A routine traffic stop on Wells Road resulted last Thursday, May 30, in the seizure of seven bags of marijuana weighing 21 pounds, with a street value of \$21,000. A Clay County Sheriff deputy stopped the car after it failed to come to a complete stop at the intersection of Papaya West and Olive Court. The car was pulled over in the 1400 block of Wells Road.

Deputies worked in conjunction with the U.S. Postal Service during the stop. A drug-sniffing dog alerted deputies to the marijuana in the trunk.

According to CCSO, "This isn't marijuana being used for medicinal purposes, distributed by a licensed professional. This is product illegally shipped and packaged to be sold on the street – at the hands of criminals."

The Orange Park woman is accused to writing checks from Jan. 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019, totaling \$64,750 to herself from the victim's account and not paying the victim back. She's also charged with using his credit card without paying the bill.

She was charged with grand theft and exploitation and ordered to not have any contact with the victim.

Her bond was set at \$50,003.

## Woman arrested after elderly woman suffers injuries

ORANGE PARK – A woman was taken to the Clay County Jail Sunday, June 2, after deputies found an elderly woman with scratches on her arm and soreness in her upper body.

Salena Kay Fox, 39, of Orange Park was charged with battery on a person 65 years or older and resisting arrest.

Fox attempted to break away from deputies as they were placing her in handcuffs, forcing one deputy on hold her on the ground until backup arrived, according to the arrest report.



Salena Fox

# Arrests and Bookings

(Name, age, location of arrest, charges). Key: FTA-Failure to Appear; DWLSR-Driving Without a License-Suspended or Revoked; DUI-Driving Under the Influence; VOP-Violation of Parole. There are no assumptions or representations about guilt or innocence.

## Tuesday, June 4

Peyton M. Hughes, 18, Orange Park, possession-cocaine

Anthony C. Colon, 18, Fleming Island, burglary  
Brian K. Evans, 34, Orange Park, resisting officer with violence, trespassing

Demar M. Priestly, 23, Oakleaf, home invasion with firearm/deadly weapon, aggravated battery with deadly weapon, grand theft more than \$100,000, false imprisonment, possession of ammo by convicted felon, contempt of court-not answering summons

Brandy J. Edward, 19, Oakleaf, conspiracy to commit armed home invasion robbery

Vincent L. Robinson, 34, Green Cove Springs, non-support

Yolanda R. Bradley, 39, Orange Park, trespassing  
Brian J. McGill, 40, Green Cove Springs, two counts possession-marijuana less than 20g

Matthew C. Teuton, 35, Green Cove Springs, non-support

Raymond N. Collier, 35, Orange Park, possession-methamphetamine

Kami R. Barnard, 39, Oakleaf, simple battery

## Monday, June 3

Austin T. Pritchard, 22, Oakleaf, possession-marijuana less than 20g

Jeremy W. Jones, 34, Orange Park, fraudulent use of credit card

Monica R. Mansfield, 31, Fleming Island, DWLSR

## Police

from page 18

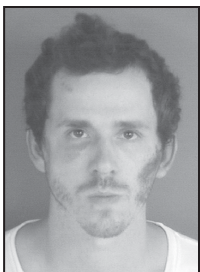
### Bingo hall break-in winds up with Jacksonville man tased, arrested

ORANGE PARK – Orange Park Police caught a man they believed was breaking into the Outreach of America Bingo on Saturday, June 1, through an air conditioning vent.

Alex Leland Risley, 29, of Jacksonville, was arrested and charged with burglary with damage of at least \$1,000, resisting arrest, two counts of providing a false identification and possession of burglary tools.

Risley apparently tried to run from police when they approached him at the business at 234 Industrial Loop East. The suspect was caught after an OPPD officer used his Taser to subdue him. After he was in custody, they found more than \$5,000 damage to the building.

Risley was placed into the Clay County Jail with bond set at \$167,512.



Alex Risley

Christian D. Copeland, 47, Orange Park, two counts grand theft \$300-\$4,999

William J. Decker, 19, Middleburg, contributing to delinquency of minor

Carl D. Hunter, 32, Green Cove Springs, FTA-use/possession of another person's ID without consent, VOP-domestic battery

Justin D. Corley, 31, Keystone Heights, possession-methamphetamine, possession/use drug equipment

Walter H. Cary, 55, Middleburg, burglary

Desiree A. Shingler, 32, Keystone Heights, possession-methamphetamine, possession/use drug equipment

Charlene M. Sternad, 36, Orange Park, possession-marijuana less than 20g, possession/use drug equipment, possession-fentanyl, possession-controlled drug without prescription

Bobby J. Willis, 29, Orange Park, burglary

William S. Taylor, 55, Orange Park, violation of pre-trial release for domestic violence

Paige M. Gresham, 23, Middleburg, two out of county warrants (Baker)

## Sunday, June 2

Austin S. Hare, 24, Orange Park, possession-controlled substance without prescription

Salena K. Fox, 39, Orange Park, battery on a person 65 or older, resist/obstruct/oppose police officer

Bjorn D. Soyland, 41, Keystone Heights, DUI, DWLSR-third offense

Jody-Ann M. Miller, 32, Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control

Kathy C. Phinizy, 30, Middleburg, simple domestic battery

James M. Ellis, 51, Orange Park, simple battery, simple domestic battery

## Saturday, June 1

Edward E. Marzigliano, 28, Orange Park, domestic battery

Armani K. Channelle, 25, Orange Park, felony shoplifting

Alex L. Risley, 29, Orange Park, vandalism, resist/obstruct/oppose posing office, possession-burglary tools, two counts giving false name/ID

Bennie L. Phelps, 76, Fleming Island, battery on person 65 or older

Curtis J. Furman, 52, Middleburg, possession-marijuana less than 20g, possession/use drug equipment, possession-cocaine, DWLSR

Melissa M. Burgos, 30, Orange Park, possession-heroin more than 10g, possession-methamphetamine, possession/use drug equipment, FTA-possession-controlled substance

Joseph C. Sweet, 34, Green Cove Springs, operating vehicle without license

Devin T. Hawkins, 22, Orange Park, possession-marijuana less than 20g

Douglas W. Swagerty, 26, Middleburg, three counts torture to animal with intent to inflict intense pain

Tchanggy K. Janvier, 22, Green Cove Springs, possession-marijuana more than 20g, possession/use drug equipment

Stephanie L. Greer, 46, Middleburg, DWLSR

Autumn J. Strang, 41, Green Cove Springs, simple battery

## Friday, May 31

Donald L. Messer, 32, Middleburg, possession/use

drug equipment, resist/obstruct/oppose police officer, loitering/prowling

Mitchell T. Leist, 27, Middleburg, aggravated battery

Joshua L. Douglass, 37, Orange Park, VOP-community control, two counts grand theft auto, giving false name/ID

Allen T.D. Brooks, 41, Green Cove Springs, introduce/remove contraband into jail

## Thursday, May 30

Dontavious M. Spencer, 24, Oakleaf, possession-marijuana less than 20g, possession/use drug equipment

James W. Alexander, 34, Middleburg, three counts possession/use drug equipment, DWLSR-second offense

Michael A. Putnam, 37, Middleburg, non-support

Efrain A. Vega, 21, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR

Sean L. Davis, 41, Green Cove Springs, armed burglary, possession of firearm by felon

Jessie Kirkendoll, 58, Green Cove Springs, three counts burglary, two counts grand theft

Kyle W. Rose, 34, Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control

Cainan J. Thomas, 20, Middleburg, burglary

Johnathon P. Mehafeey, 27, Middleburg, possession-controlled substance without prescription, possession-methamphetamine, resist/obstruct/oppose pole officer, possession-firearm by convicted felon

Demetrius K. McKinzie, 19, Middleburg, possession-marijuana with intent to sell/manufacture/deliver, possession/use drug equipment, resist/obstruct/oppose police officer

Jason A. Moody, 28, Orange Park, possession-ammo by convicted felon, resist/obstruct/oppose police officer, trespassing

Edantwan R. Norton, 30, Middleburg, resist/obstruct/oppose police officer

Vernette J. Philemond, 33, Orange Park, retail petit

theft

Pierre R. Lazarre, 20, Orange Park, FTA-no valid ID  
Cedrick Pierce, 30, Green Cove Springs, workman's comp fraud

Parrish W. Samford, 25, Orange Park, battery on police officer/firefighter/EMT, resisting police with violence

Anthony D. Lowe, 27, Middleburg, simple domestic battery

## Wednesday, May 29

Bryce A. Dalton, 19, Fleming Island, possession/use drug equipment

Tara V. Embry, 32, Green Cove Springs, battery on a police officer/firefighter/EMT

Raymond G. Brewer, 40, Green Cove Springs, DWLSR

Christopher R. Moore, 21, Middleburg, grand theft \$300-\$4,999

Zachary C. Boyd, 30, Green Cove Springs, VOP-domestic battery

Bryan K. Boettcher, 52, Green Cove Springs, VOP-domestic battery, VOP-violation of injunction against domestic violence

Joe T. Batdorf, 36, Green Cove Springs, VOP-petit theft

Leslie L. Padgett, 32, Middleburg, county of county (Duval) warrant

Christopher S. Summerford, 31, Orange Park, petit theft

Duzti J. Davis, 30, Orange Park, FTA-grand theft (Duval County)

Bobby D. Dunbar, 20, Oakleaf, home invasion with firearm/deadly weapon, aggravated battery with deadly weapon, grand theft more than \$100,000, false imprisonment, possession of firearm by convicted felon

Vincent L. Robinson, 34, Green Cove Springs, petit theft-third offense

John A. McBane, 54, Middleburg, child neglect, DUI, DWLSR-third offense, no registration

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PD BY CSTF

# Hogan

from page 1

because of the cancer treatments.”

When Hogan’s mother went into remission, Hogan told her mom how she felt about the way their hungry family often was turned away.

“There’s probably people out there with the same problem getting turned away just because they have a job, even if they’re not able to work,” Hogan said. “My mom said, ‘what are you going to do about this?’”

Hogan immediately began brainstorming with her older sister, Shakwan, to come up with a solution to that problem. That’s how Hogan’s nonprofit, now 6 years old, was born. Called SKOA Inc., which stands for Shakwan and Kenyatta Open Arms, this 501c3 nonprofit serves Clay County to help the homeless and people in situations like the Hogans years ago go to sleep with food in their stomachs.

“Nobody should go to sleep hungry,”



Kenyatta Hogan, right, delivers food to another appreciative family. The 16-year-old started non-profit SKOA when her mother couldn’t buy groceries during chemotherapy sessions.

Hogan said.

When SKOA Inc. was started in 2013, Hogan was just 10 years old. While most 10-year-olds could likely be found on a playground with other kids, Hogan could likely be found brainstorming the next move for SKOA Inc. with her older sister.

“I’ve just always been the type of person

to see someone in need and want to help,” Hogan said, explaining why SKOA Inc. was something she wanted to do at such a young age. “I want to bring out the best in people. I want to make them smile and have a good time. I just want to help everyone I can.”

Now, six years later, SKOA Inc. can be found every other Sunday at the Orange Park Farmer’s Market, hosting food drives throughout the year and for the first time ever, this year, handing out Thanksgiving baskets for families in need during the holidays. Usually, the non-profit crew consists of Hogan, her mother, her stepfather and her sister, but throughout the year, her closest friends will volunteer as well.

Because of her connection with Ridgeview – she participates in wrestling, track, football, concert band and marching band – SKOA Inc. also serves as a hub for community service hours for other Ridgeview students looking to volunteer.

When Hogan isn’t at school or participating in her many extracurricular activities, she can likely be found doing something for Girl Scouts, for SKOA Inc. or working with her mom.

“I wake up at 5 a.m. most days and usually don’t get home until 10-11 p.m.,” Hogan said.

When Hogan graduates in two years, she hopes to continue her nonprofit’s expansion into Clay County. She sees the 501c3 offering not only food provision services like it does right now, but babysitting, tutoring and other community outreach services as well. While she’d like to see the nonprofit grow and grow, she plans to split her time between SKOA Inc. and her career pursuit. Hogan hopes to be a TV producer and author.

According to Hogan, the woman who helped inspire her to start SKOA Inc., her mother, is proud of what she’s done for the community. “She tells me often that she’s really proud of me,” Hogan said. “I don’t see it as a really big thing sometimes, though. There’s so much more I want to do, but I’m so young and only have so many resources so I just feel like I’m simply doing what I can. My mom is always telling me I’m too humble.”

Despite the strain of her extensive schedule which includes her work for SKOA Inc., Hogan said she wouldn’t change a thing.

“Sure, it can be overwhelming and a lot to keep up with, but I’m happy with what [SKOA Inc.] is able to do here,” Hogan said. “I love doing it and wouldn’t trade it for the world.”

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**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

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# TODAY'S Sports

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## Pitching prowess bolsters Clay Today SUPER 11 baseball team

By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

FLEMING ISLAND – Stellar pitching performances by Clay County's high school baseball team fueled strong team finishes with names like Evan Wickeri, Dylan Faulkner, Finn Howell and Zack Mercer dominating from the mound as top picks for the Clay Today SUPER 11 baseball team.

The Clay Today SUPER 11 sports teams are comprised of the top 11 athletes in their respective sports as chosen by the Clay Today sports staff and photographers.

SEE BASEBALL, 26



Fleming Island High senior pitcher Zack Mercer powers with fastball. Mercer is one of a handful of top pitchers on SUPER 11 team.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Ridgeview High football wide receiver Brian Jackson snaps off selfie with mom Tasha Young at scholarship signing ceremony at the school on Wed., May 29.

## Six Panthers sign college scholarships

By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – With graduation looming less than a week away, six Ridgeview High athletes were able to sign final scholarships to continue their sports at the college level.

With two baseball; Evan Wickeri and Justin Farmer; two football, Brian Jackson and Dominic Stanfield; a cheerleader, Dacia Bradford and a volleyball ace, Katie Belveal, Panther athletic director John Sgromolo gave his final impassionate speech to athletes under his direction at the final ceremony of the school year.

SEE SCHOLARSHIP, 22

## Sage earns family street cred with Half Ironman finish

By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

FLEMING ISLAND - Fleming Island resident Larry Sage, owner of the Sage Group, a commercial real estate operation in Fleming Island, had spent the last four or five years watching his very athletic twin daughters, Courtney and Kendall, earn high school athletic awards in track, basketball and swimming before embarking on his own athletic adventure to earn a spot at the dinner table.

"My two daughters are doing real well in their own sports," said Sage. "Courtney in track was second in the 100 hurdles while Kendall was a top scorer for the basketball team and also a state track meet athlete. I felt a need."

The street cred came with a finish at the Gulf Coast Ironman 70.3 half Ironman triathlon held May 11 in Panama City Beach. The 70.3 format triathlon includes a 1.2 mile swim in the Gulf of Mexico, a



Fleming Island triathlete Larry Sage takes on the lonely roads on his bike in his preparation for more summer races.

56.1 mile bike trek on the suffocatingly hot and humid roads in and around Panama City Beach and an oven-like 13.1 mile half marathon run with a searing sun at the athlete's back.

Sage completed the sojourn in seven hours, 40 minutes, 23 seconds to finished as 56th male of 65 finishers in the 55-59 age group and 1,230th overall of the 2,000 starters and 1,300 finishers. Overall male winner T.J. Tollakson finished in 3:54:19.

"The wind out on the bike was behind us, but when we turned around, it was brutal hard on the way back," said Sage. "I train at the Baldwin Trail, but replicating those weather conditions was impossible."

The Texas-born Sage, 55, a 15 year resident in Clay County and a college soccer player in the United Kingdom in

SEE SAGE, 30



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## Grafals inks hoops scholarship

By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

FLEMING ISLAND – From the ashes of disaster in his home country Puerto Rico, Fleming Island High School basketball senior Gianfranco Grafals took the final step to realizing an American dream finish by signing a basketball scholarship Friday morning in the schools Hall of Champions. Grafals signed to continue play at Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa, OK.

“I came to Fleming Island after my country was destroyed by a hurricane,” said Grafals, who was joined in the celebration by his parents, Miriam and Carlos Grafals and his brother John Carlos. “We had nothing. My cousin was already here, Sebastian Astor (also a Puerto Rico Junior National team member and Fleming Island High player), and his family took us in.”

Grafals, a high-flying point guard for

the Puerto Rico Junior National team and, most recently, the Golden Eagles for the past two seasons, culminated his journey to America with a first-time Final Four appearance for Fleming Island after directing a 22-3 overall season record under third year coach Traavis Chandler.

“In Puerto Rico, the game is a little more physical and Gianfranco had to adjust to our game here in Florida,” said Chandler. “He had to adjust to that and then he became a great team player. The biggest asset he brought to his team was his work ethic. He’s a great teammate.”

Grafals played for Puerto Rico’s FIBA U-18 team at the U-18 Americas Championship in Canada where Puerto Rico finished fourth behind the USA, Canada and Argentina. Astor, a year younger, played

SEE GRAFALS, 27



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Fleming Island High senior basketball player Gianfranco Grafals, seated center, has his hoops teammates with him to sign to play at Northern Oklahoma College next fall.

## Scholarship

from page 21

“It’s all about being great teammates and practicing with energy,” said Sgromolo, himself a Flagler College baseball scholarship player and a former Los Angeles Dodger draftee. “It’s athletes like this group that made coaching fun.”

Belveal, a senior player for coach Destiny Brightman, was instrumental in the Lady Panthers’ four straight district titles and region playoff berths. Belveal, a team captain, signed to attend Pasco Hernando State College, a two year program in the Florida College Systems Activities Association. The Bobcats were 21-8 overall last year and 10-1 in the Sun-Lakes Conference. The Bobcats lost in the FCSAA final to Lake Sumter State College.

For the Ridgeview High cheerleader squad, Bradford heads to Webber Interna-



Ridgeview High cheerleader Dacia Bradford gets a congratulatory smooch from dad Jason while mom Connie gets a laugh as Bradford signed to cheer at Webber International.

tional University in Babson Lake.

“From sportsmanship awards, sideline awards and a 16th in nation finish, Dacia is



Ridgeview High volleyball ace Katie Belveal signed on to play at Pasco-Hernando State College, a junior college that finished 21-8 last year with a loss in the state finals.



Panther baseball ace Justin Farmer, left, with Panther coach John Sgromolo, gave an emotional thank you speech to his mom and dad before signing to University of Maine in Presque Isle.

now a Warrior, but always a Panther,” said Ridgeview cheer coach Amy Stutts.

From Panther football, coach Cameron Porch added two more signees to his 21 signed athletes in the past three years with wideout Brian Jackson and linebacker Dominic Stanfield inking in the final week.

Jackson, who had a horrific leg injury after the preseason classic last year, was able to play just three games for Porch.

“He was the hardest practice player I’ve ever coached in my life,” said Porch. “Even with three games, he led the team with 20 receptions, 344 yards and five touchdowns.”

Jackson heads to the Point University Skyhawks in West Point, GA. an NAIA program that finished 3-8 last year.

Stanfield, one of Porch’s leading tacklers on the Panther defense with 90 stops and 2.5 sacks, heads to Middle Georgia State University in Macon, an NAIA program that finished 7-3 last year with a South Atlantic Conference title and a 43-7 loss in the National Club Football Association National Semifinals against Apprentice State. The conference title was the fifth in seven years for Middle Georgia and

a fourth appearance in the NCFCA playoffs.

“Dom was always first guy on the field, last guy off, a class act,” said Porch.

In baseball, the Ridgeview High, coached by Sgromolo, was expected to finish at .500 for the season with a slew of top graduates, but senior Evan Wickeri was the catalyst for a season that saw Ridgeview knock off Clay in the district semifinal to get to the district championship and earn a region playoff berth.

Wickeri, one of the top pitchers in the county, heads to Florida State College in Jacksonville, a junior college that finished 13-30 in 2019, with teammate Justin Farmer, an outfielder, heading to University of Maine at Presque Isle, an NCAA Division III school that finished 1-31 last year.

“This pair becomes signees number 13 and 14 for Ridgeview baseball in the past four seasons,” said Sgromolo. “I’ve known both Evan and Justin since they were probably 10 years old and it’s exciting to see them here today.”

Wickeri will join an FSCJ program that has had familiar faces in the past including Austin Morton (FIHS) and Austin Burke (CHS), both sophomores this season.



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## SOCCER ACTION

### Hauth hat trick tops Clay 4-3 win

EAGLE HARBOR – Fleming Island High graduate and soccer star Lucas Hauth teamed with a handful of former teammates and rivals on the Clay County Soccer mens team to win 4-3 against HURACAN FC in the United Professional Soccer League home opener Sunday afternoon at the Clay County Soccer Complex in Eagle Harbor.

Hauth scored his three goals in the first half to put Clay County up 3-0 before another Fleming Island High soccer ace, J.B. Alvarez iced the game in the second half with penalty kick.

On the wings feeding Hauth for his goals was two-time Gatorade player of the year Reed Davis, another Fleming Island High grad and Geo Abreu, an Oakleaf High graduate, as the Clay County team featured a plethora of county talent from past years.

The win puts Clay County at 6-1-3 and in third place in the Southeast Conference



Ridgeview High soccer standout Donte Desantis manned the midfield line for Clay County.

of the Florida Central East Division.

Clay County travels to St. Petersburg to take on the St. Petersburg FC Aztecs on Sat., June 8 with a home match on Sun., June 9 against the Macca Ballers FC.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Fleming Island High grad Lucas Hauth, left, gets handshake from another Fleming Island star, J.B. Alvarez, after Hauth scored second of three first half goals.



Oakleaf High midfielder Geo Abreu tangles with ball in Clay County Soccer's 4-3 win over



Clay High graduate Elizabeth Stoffel, left, now at Florida Institute of Technology battles for ball in 0-0 tie between Florida SOL and the Florida Gulf Coast Dutch Lions on Sunday.

### Florida SOL girls go 0-0

FLEMING ISLAND– The Florida SOL girls soccer team, playing in the Sunshine Conference of the Women's Premier Soccer League, pushed to a 0-0 tie with the visiting Florida Gulf Coast Dutch Lions to go to 0-1-1 in the first week of the summer season and the home opener at the Clay County Soccer Complex in Eagle Harbor.

Fueled by players from around the Clay County high schools and also the southeastern United State, the SOL team sits behind unbeaten Orlando Kicks FC and FC Surge (both 2-0) with Florida Krush and Florida Gulf Coast Dutch Lions in the chase spots below.

Ridgeview High standout Autumn Woodward, now at University of South Florida, has the lone goal for the SOL team in their season opening 5-1 loss to the Orlando Kicks FC on May 27.

The Florida SOL goes back to the road for their next two games with a trip to Florida Atlantic University to play Team Boca Blast on June 8 and a June 9 trip to Scheck Hillel Community School in Miami



Fleming Island High's Kiersten Sciartelli gets faceful of soccer ball in header.

to take on the FC Surge.

The team returns home Sat., June 15 to host the Florida Tropics SC with a travel game in Orlando on Sun., June 16 against Puerto Rico Pride FC.

On the team are area notables like Mackenzie Ayers (FIHS), Nikki Conte (OHS), Alia Skinner (FIHS), Cali Larsen (FIHS), Kiersten Sciartelli (FIHS) and Elisabeth Stoffel (CHS).



Florida SOL goalie Alia Skinner is one of top departing goalies in America's high schools.



Fleming Island High grad and Jacksonville University freshman ace Reed Davis head balls away in 4-3 win Sunday.



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# Fleming's Chop, Lascano grapple with Indiana national team

By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – Fleming Island High School wrestlers Luke Chop and Jeffrey Lascano, both juniors, competed with an Indiana high school team that was chock full of state champions and state runnerups as invitees to the National High School Coaches Association's National Duals Championships held May 29-31 in Virginia Beach.

Chop, 55-6 last year and a third place finisher at 152 at regions and state for coach P.J. Cobbert's second place team in Class 3A, and Lascano, 43-7, and a third at regions at 220, both competed with the Indiana Outlaws Black team that finished eighth of 250 teams at the high-powered national event.

For the three day event, Chop and Lascano both finished at five wins, four losses against numerous high-powered fields.

The Indiana Black team featured three Indiana state champs; one a three-time champion; one state runnerup and seven state medalists (top six).

Overall champion was the Team Kong United which featured a plethora of nationwide champions including a five-time New York champion, a four-time Alabama champion and a four-time Virginia cham-



Fleming Island High junior Luke Chop, third at 152 in Class 3A, finished 5-4 in Virginia.

Chop has won 13 national titles in multiple disciplines.



Two Fleming Island High School and North Florida Wrestling Academy wrestlers; Luke Chop, back row left, and Jeffrey Lascano, back row, second from right, wrestled with the Indiana Outlaws Black team at the NHSCA National Duals Championship in Virginia Beach. The Outlaws finished as eighth team nationally out of 250 teams. Below, Lascano finished 5-4 in Virginia.



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# Eagle Landing hosts Eagle Harbor swim action




STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO



Summer club swim action opened with Eagle Harbor's Scream'n Eagles visiting the Eagle Landing's Eagle Rays on Saturday. Top left; Jackson Murphy, ELER free relay; top center, Katie Townsend, EHST 100 IM; top right, ELER Jeremiah Bredeson, 100IM; left center, EHST backstroke Lilly Chop; center ELER's Griffin Osbeck gets set; center right, mom Jacqueline Kroggel advises daughter Juliet; bottom left, Shea Norton eases through backstroke.

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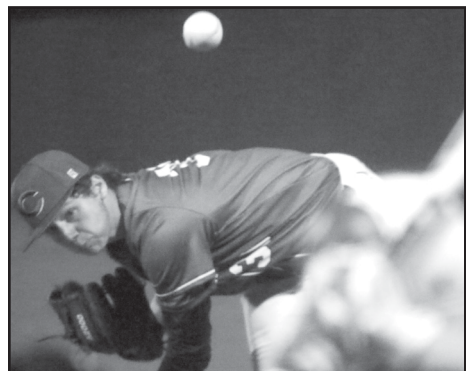
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# Baseball

from page 21

## Zack Mercer, Fleming Island, Senior, P/3B

Pushing to a second district 2-8A title, Mercer was the backbone of the Golden Eagles team under second year coach Grant Bigilin that came within a strike or two of replicating their region championship finish a year ago. Mercer, handling 85 whiffs and just 11 earned runs off the mound for an 8-2 overall record, averaged a strong nine strikeouts everytime he stayed for seven innings. Mercer also sported a .299 batting average with 40 putouts in 54 touches when at third base.



CHS Dylan Faulkner powers fastball in.

## Dylan Faulkner, Clay, Senior, P/OF

Faulkner, who just returned from a FACAA All Star game appearance, punched out 73 strikeouts for the year off a 5-3 won/lost record while controlling games with a 1.773 earned runs average for the Blue Devils. Faulkner had championship performances against district 4-5A champion Bishop Kenny, 11 strikeouts in 3-0 win; district 4-6A champion Ponte Vedra, seven strikeouts in 5-4 win and 5A region semifinalist and 2018 runnerup Bolles, nine strikeouts in 2-1 win.

Faulkner also hit .246 with five runs batted in and three doubles.



SJCDS Finn Howell has three more years to shine for Spartans.

## Finn Howell, SJCDS, Freshman, P

As one of the youngest prospective superstars to play in Clay County, Howell was top hurler in two-man front (with Brad Hodges, also a freshman) for coach Tom Lucas. St. Johns Country Day School got to the region championship to faceoff with powerhouse North Florida Christian, who



Evan Wickeri, Ridgeview left, gets tag at second on Chase Holman, Clay

got bumped in the state semifinal by defending 3A champion Canterbury. Howell worked with a 1.28 ERA with 48 strikeouts to finish 8-2 with just 11 walks delivered. Howell hit a strong .289 with one homer, one triple and four doubles and pitched to wins against district 4-7A champion and region semifinalist Bartram Trail (3Ks), 4-6A runnerup and region quarterfinalist Ridgeview (twice 5Ks and 3Ks), 2-8A champion and region quarterfinalist Fleming Island (3Ks), district 1-3A runnerup Maclay (6Ks) and 4-5A champion Bishop Kenny (5Ks). Howell also blasted a homer against Maclay.

## Evan Wickeri, RHS, senior, P/2B

Wickeri was key returner from senior-laden 2018 team and led by example with 1.19 ERA from the mound as one of the top throwers in area. Wickeri finished with 58 strikeouts against 238 batters with just 39 hits.

At the plate, Wickeri was one of toughest outs for area pitchers to face with an amazing three strikeouts for the season; two against Fleming Island, one against Bolles, against a strong .415 batting average that included 13 RBIs off six doubles and 34 hits. Wickeri got on base often and was left stranded 27 times with 10 steals.

In the field, Wickeri had just three er-



OHS Logan Schmidt was Knights hurler.

rors on 79 touches with four double plays with shortstop Calvin Gunsaulus.

## Logan Schmidt, OHS, Junior, P/IF

Schmidt followed in big brother Jacob's footsteps as a team leader with his arm and with his bat. Jacob Schmidt was a tour de force with his arm from the catcher's slot while being a big bat and Logan answered from the mound with a 2.31 ERA and 44 strikeouts while hitting .271 with three homers. Schmidt was strong with just eight walks on the year and 19 RBIs from the plate.



SJCDS Tyler Kuramoto with out tag at home.

## Tyler Kuramoto, SJCDS, Senior, C

Kuramoto has been a mainstay of power for the Spartans for a long time and he showed off that power with back-to-back homers in two final regular season games with a .321 batting average and six doubles also. In 112 touches behind the plate, Kuramoto hiccuped just once with the other 111 outs for coach Tom Lucas.

## Chase Holman, CHS, Senior, C

Holman was Mr. Excitement for Blue Devil coach Joshua Persinger as he was the guy who often got the key hit, key steal or even a key appearance on the mound

late in close games. Holman batted .358 with 13 singles, eight doubles and three homers off top pitchers on Clay's rugged schedule. Able to push his footspeed for the doubles made Holman a dangerous single-to-double threat for lazy outfielders. Holman had 18 RBIs as well and was left on base 38 times with three steals.

On the mound, Holman had five appearances with six strikeouts.

## Noah McCollum, FIHS, Senior, SS

McCollum was the difference maker in the shortstop "6" hole with an area leading 12 doubles plays turned for the season off 84 touches with just nine errors. McCollum had the stalwart aid of a strong second baseman in Dylan Bonham and a deft first baseman in Justin Hawkins.

At the plate, McCollum was a tough out at .298BA with three doubles and a triple to get eight RBIs and 10 steals.



MHS Collin Henderson heads to home.

## Collin Henderson, MHS, Senior, OF

On a Middleburg High team that had explosive bats, Henderson was the ringleader with his .279 batting average that had seven doubles and three homers. Henderson scored 28 runs for the Broncos with 10 steals aiding him.

## Anthony Roman, RHS, Senior, C

Roman was one of the strongest arms and bats for coach Sgromolo with a .349 batting average, but more impressively 43 times left on base which made him a scoring threat most of the time when he entered the batters' box. At catcher, Roman had a rifle arm with one error, one double play and an area-high 18 assists; mainly picks at 2B on 27 steal attempts.

## Justin Mosley, CHS, Senior, P/3B

Mosley transferred from Middleburg to join the Blue Devils and immediately showed that he was going to be an impact player wherever he was; at pitcher, at bat or at third base. With wins over St. Johns Country Day School and Ridgeview; both region playoffs teams and with six strikeouts in each game, plus a 13 whiff night against district foe Menendez in a 9-0 win, Mosley was power on the mound to the tune of 46 strikeouts and a 2.063 ERA with a 6-3 won/lost record. At bat, Mosley powered away with a .351 BA, 14 RBIs, 21 singles, two doubles, two triples and a homer while getting two steals.



**Knights signees**

STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High School signed off their final three athletes with, left to right, Alex Guzewich heading to Tallahassee Community College for baseball; with basketball standouts Zaki Butler and Kenny Thomas both signing to play at Columbia International University in South Carolina. Behind the trio is baseball coach Chris Lannom and basketball coach Jason Price.

**Grafals**

from page 22

for Puerto Rico in the FIBA U-17 Basketball World Cup in Argentina where they finished third.

For Chandler, it is his second scholarship athlete since arriving at Fleming Island with forward Joshua Deleon signing last year to Toccoa Falls College in Georgia and recently transferring to Trinity Baptist College in Jacksonville.

"I think our game here transitions very well to the college level just because we run so much," said Chandler. "Our kids are in good shape when they leave and that's a good starting point in the college level. He will leave some big shoes to fill next year."

For Grafals, who averaged near 20 points per game with a handful of highlight reel dunks along the way, the choice for Northern Oklahoma as opposed to other schools at higher classifications, was a matter fitting. Northern Oklahoma, the Mavericks, finished at 20-12 last year with a season-ending loss in the NJCAA region 2 semifinals and boasts a seasons of 24-8, 23-10, 26-7 and 19-12 since 2015 with a 27-4 conference title in 2013.

"They have a long list of players that went to Division I and Division II schools after playing there," said Grafals. "They showed me the most love in fitting my family background."

Grafals cited his home game win over Oakleaf in January as his best performance of the season and lamented the district championship loss to the same Knights in February.

"I wish I could get that one back because I was sick all week for that one," said Grafals. "I got 19 points, but it wasn't enough."

After the district tournament, Grafals put Fleming Island High, ranked fourth in 8A, on his shoulders and pushed through two region playoff wins; First Coast (72-63) and Lee (64-60) before earning the school's first region title over Lincoln (67-



Fleming Island High's Gianfranco Grafals is second scholarship signee for three year coach Traavis Chandler and leader of first-ever Final Four appearance for school.

58).

In the Class 8A semifinal, the surge stopped abruptly 60-38 to Lakewood Ranch High, the eventual 8A runnerup to No. 1-ranked Blanche Ely. Lakewood Ranch finished ranked eighth.

In 2018, Grafals, with a 14.1 points per game average, led Fleming Island to a district semifinal finish, losing to Creekside 57-44 after beating Buchholz in the district quarterfinal. Creekside eventually lost to Blanche Ely in the 8A championship game.



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

**Jaguars back on field**

JACKSONVILLE – Back on the summer OTA practice fields, the Jacksonville Jaguars have started their journey to get to the 2019 season under the leadership of Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles at quarterback, here handing off to running back Alfred Blue in Thursday's OTA session. Foles, recently acquired from the Philadelphia Eagles after leading them to a Super Bowl win over the New England Patriots, replaces Blake Bortels, who was released after last season. The Jaguars open their preseason games on August 8 with a trip to the Baltimore Ravens before returning to TIAA Field Thurs., Aug. 15 to face the Philadelphia Eagles.

Below: Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp batter Santiago Chavez bunts as baserunner Bryson Brigman gets ready for suicide squeeze run in Shrimps' 2-1 loss to Mobile Bay Bears on Tues., May 28. The Shrimp, now 23-34, won two against Bay Bears and finish a road week in Pensacola before returning to Jacksonville Fri., June. 7.

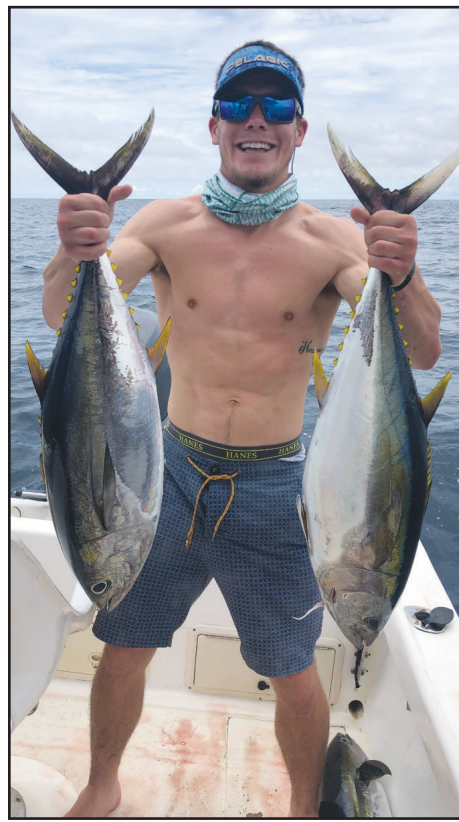
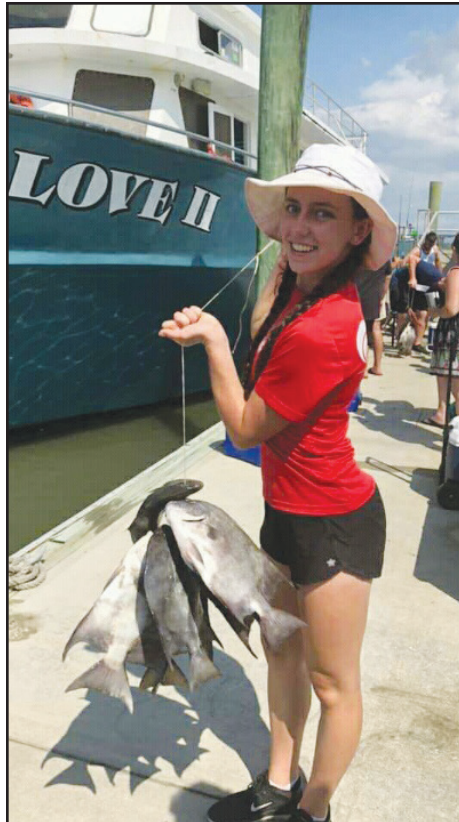




# FISH TALES

**Send me your tales**

Clay Today sports editor Randy Lefko would like to see more fishing adventure photos throughout the summer. Email to [randy@opcfcla.com](mailto:randy@opcfcla.com) with contact information.



More fish tales from area anglers include; top left Jason Lain in St. Augustine, top right, Leslie Ann Ewell kissing up to a Spadefish in St. Augustine while daughter Anna Magruder, left, sports a wire full of fish from Sea Love II charter boat. Left center, Drew Carter, Fleming Island High grad and gymnast mans two Yellowfin Tuna from Dream On sport fishing in Costa Rica with Andrew Wallman of Green Cove Springs sporting a Costa Rica Roosterfish.

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**Hawks softball ends season lose in A-10 championship**

Courtesy: SJU Athletic Communications

AMHERST, Mass. – Fighting until the final out, the Saint Joseph's softball team's season came to an end as the fifth-seeded Hawks fell to top seed Fordham, 10-2, in the Atlantic 10 Championship on Saturday at the UMass Softball Complex.

Junior pitcher Ashley Stokes, a Clay High graduate, finished with a 2.33 earned runs average with 12 games, two in relief. Stokes finished with 21 strikeouts in 2017 and 16 in 2018 with 29 appearances in her three years; 12 as the starting pitcher.

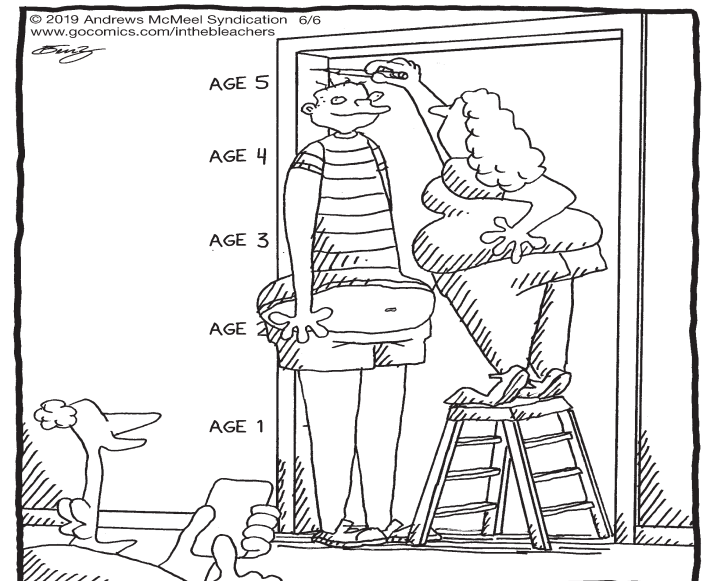
Picked to finish seventh in the A-10 preseason poll, the Hawks proved the doubters wrong this year as they advanced to the semifinals of the conference tournament and finished with a 28-25 record for their first winning season since 2015.

# Fun AND Humor

## Flying McCoys



## In the Bleachers



## Non-Sequitur



## Ziggy

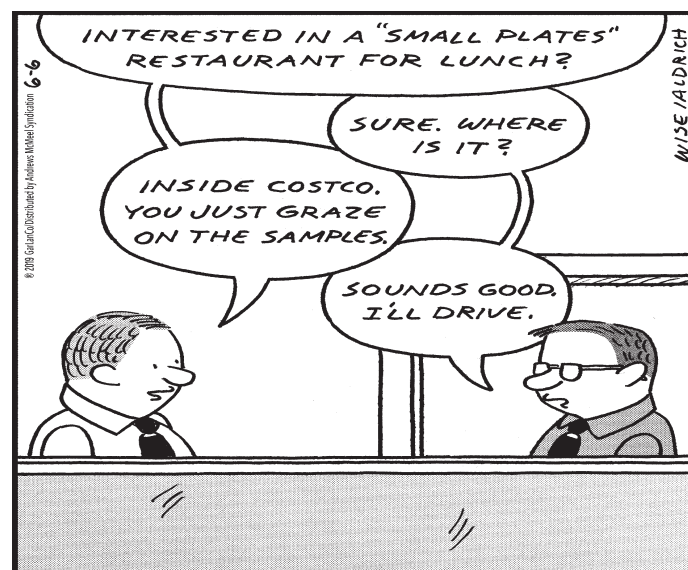


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		E	R	S	E			A	N	A	S			
D	R	E	S	S	E	D		B	A	G	H	D	A	D
A	B	C										I	P	O
P	E	G	A	S	U	S		E	R	A	S	U	R	E
			R	A	N	A		M	U	C	H			
P	L	A	S	T	I	D		B	E	C	A	U	S	E
C	A	M	E	R	O	N		A	S	E	P	T	I	C
T	O	O	N	A	E	A	R		D	E	I	S	M	
		Y	A	P		S	A	G		E	L	L		
		S	L	Y		S	R	O		D	Y	E		

## Real Life Adventures



## UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

		1		5	2		7	
5			4			9		
	8			9			2	
			9				1	8
		3		1		2		
1	5				3			
	9			8			4	
		8			7			2
	7		2	4		1		

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

# wjct HIGHLIGHTS

AN EVENING WITH FRONTLINE'S

## MICHAEL KIRK

JUNE 18, 2019 | 6PM

wjct



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## Sage

from page 21

Swanse-Wales until 1987, had dabbled in road running races since his 1987 days on the soccer pitch with a 26.2 marathon in Texas in 1983 before starting his career phase of life with wife Barbara.

"The Dallas White Rock Marathon was my biggest challenge to that point," said Sage.

Sage has been dabbling in sprint triathlons (.25 mile swim, 15 mile bike, 3.1 mile run) locally for the past five years with an Olympic distance race (0.9 mile swim in St. Johns River, 25 mile bike and 6.2 mile run) in downtown Jacksonville last year as his launch for a longer event in his future.

"Barbara had done the sprint triathlons over in Jacksonville Beach and she gave me the bug," said Sage.

After taking on the Jacksonville Olympic distance race in summer 2018, Sage pushed his thoughts to the half Ironman.

"The river current was a pain in that one," said Sage. "I had done six sprint races prior to that one and swimming was not my strength and the current went in all directions."

Sage, who swims frequently at the Eagle Harbor pools and rides his Cervelo triathlon bike in the area, says the pool-to-open water swim was the most daunting challenge of triathlon.

"The mile was daunting," said Sage. "A mile swim will whip you."

After finishing the Olympic distance race, signing up for Panama City was a stealthy move.

"Six months before the race, I started thinking about it, but didn't tell anyone in case I wanted to back out of it," said Sage. "Once I made the \$300 commit for the entry fee, I had to go."

After the swim, Sage finished on the bike, then wobbled on to the run.

"I figured riding the bike and the running were strong on my end," said Sage, who noted the Panama City lifeguards were flying the beach's Red Flags for un-



Barbara Sage crosses finish line of Jacksonville Triathlon in move that spurn husband Larry to compete.

safe swim conditions the morning of the race. "It was like a washing machine, but I survived. I was shaky off the bike to the run, but one thing I did was eat and hydrate a lot along the way."

For the triathlons, Sage noted that the mental tenacity part of competing was the biggest factor.

"I had to learn to deal mentally with swimming, bike, and running uncomfortable," said Sage. "The mental part was new to me in the longer races."

Despite the horrendous conditions, Sage commented that the training commitment was a big part of not backing out.

"When you realize how much time, energy and money you invest in getting to the race, it's hard to just quit once you get there," said Sage. "The wind was tough and the weather was hot and I was calculating at the end of the run how much walking and running I could do to make the 8.5 hour finishing cutoff time. It was tough to do the math when you feel like dying."

Post half Ironman, Sage has declared retirement.

"The kids think it's pretty cool," said Sage. "We'll see what happens later. After soccer, I never thought I would do a triathlon."



The Sage sisters, twins Courtney, left, and Kendall are standout athletes in track, basketball and swimming for the St. Johns Country Day School Spartans athletic program.

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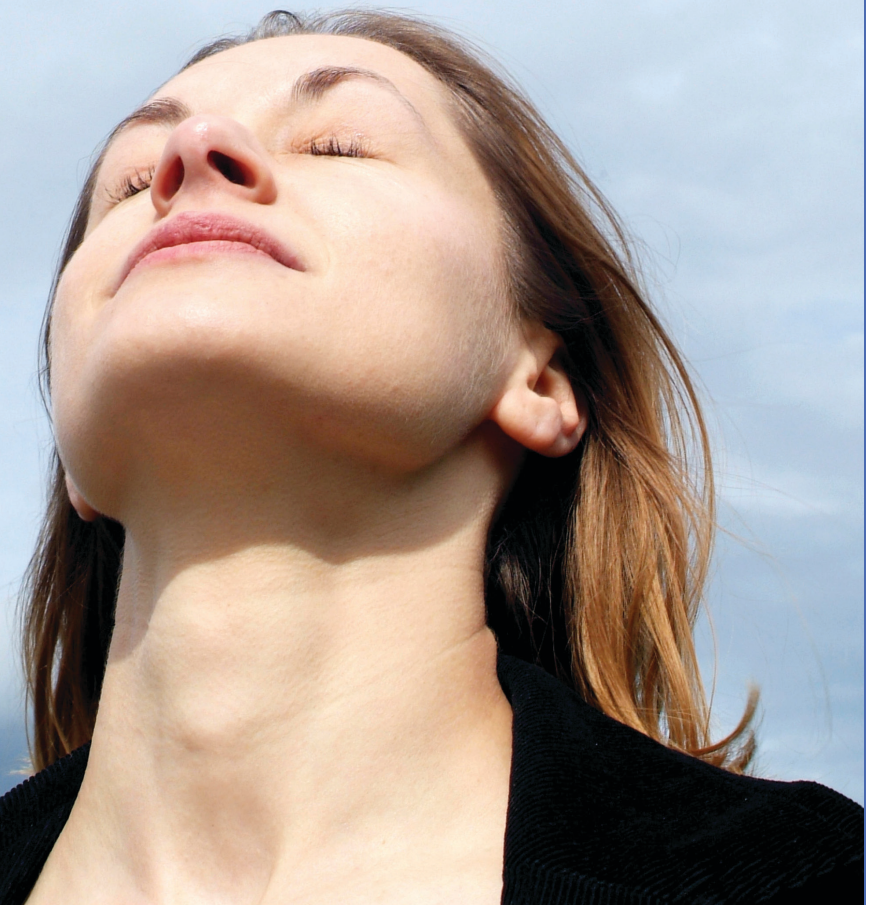








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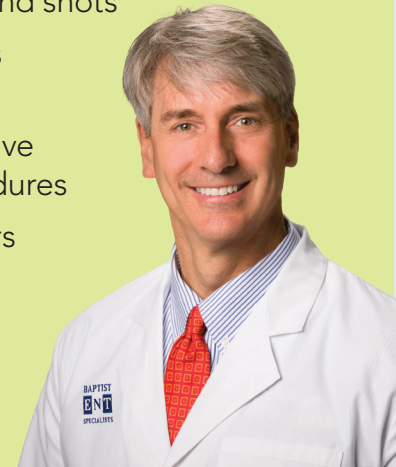
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